

ROLE OF CULTURE IN LEARNING ENGLISH
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Master's Thesis

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Abstract

This qualitative study sought to find the role of culture in learning English as a foreign language, among a group of undergraduate students, of a low intermediate level course. A questionnaire applied to the seventeen students of the class, classroom observations, interviews to the classroom teachers and five case studies were used to find data to answer the research questions. The relationship between culture and language is indissoluble. Culture is shown as a super-macro skill that sustains the four traditional linguistic skills, sharing with Kramersch the five macro skills paradigm (Kramersch, *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, 1993), (Kramersch, *Language and Culture*, 1998). Culture could be the source of potential conflict with impact on classroom interaction: Students struggled with their own different cultures, the target culture while they were learning English. Teaching English should allow students to learn about themselves and others, as members of different cultures (Delors, et al., 1996). Students also need cultural competence to live in harmony. It was also found that cultured topics favored students' communicative competence and their levels of learning. There were found samples of experiential knowledge (Moss, et al., 2000). Culture should be explicitly taught and learned. It was that zone of proximal development that moved learning upward. This study could be a point of departure for further research on Vygotsky socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, *Thought and Language*, 1986).

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

This study was conducted among a group of undergraduate students of English as a Foreign Language at Universidad del Norte, in the city of Barranquilla. This industrial and commercial port has a population of 1.2 million inhabitants, is well known as The Colombia's Golden Gate and is located on its Caribbean Coast.

As in many other regions in the country, the Caribbean Coast has a wide range of populations in the lowest socio-economic conditions that are marked by poverty and the lack of educational quality. This has generated serious implications for regional development, the consolidation of its autonomy, its leadership and social progress.

For the reasons expressed above, the founders of Universidad del Norte have as one Vision, since 1966, to create an institution that contributes to educate professionals of the highest quality, with the full commitment of the region's social and human development through the generation, diffusion, extension and transformation of knowledge.

Universidad del Norte is considered the main private higher institution of the Caribbean Colombian Coast. It offers 25 undergraduate programs, 66 specialization graduate courses, 48 master's degrees and 10 doctorate programs. Its population is composed of more than 10.000 undergraduate students, about 2.500 graduate students and about 1.000 teachers. It has 38

research groups admitted by Colciencias, the Colombian Administrative Department for Science, Technology and Innovation.

Additionally, the Languages Institute at Universidad del Norte has 8 regular levels for students of the different undergraduate and extension programs. It also has a variety of specialized advisory and consultancy courses that are offered to companies, public institutions and other educational clients.

This research is focused on undergraduate students of the fourth level that correspond to a low intermediate level of English, or A2, in the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR).

The author of this research has a B.A in Philology and Languages, with English and Spanish as majors, as well as a B.A in Law and Social Sciences with a Specialization degree in Communications Law.

Among all her fields of experience, she has invested about 30 years working with language as a means of communication including 15 years with ExxonMobil as an Analyst of Corporate Communications and Public Relations, dealing with all kinds of topics related to coal productions and exports, and 15 years in middle school and higher education.

Her experience in international commerce and educational environments motivated her to matriculate, at Universidad del Norte, in the Specialization of English Language Teaching that led to her Master's Degree in English Language Teaching. At the same time, she earned a Diploma of Spanish as a Foreign Language, DELE, at the Cervantes Institute, in Barranquilla, at

Universidad del Norte, and in 2014 she earned the University of Cambridge ESOL Teaching Award, ICELT, In-service Certificate.

During the last three years she also got three other diplomas to complement her interest on human rights, human development and democracy: the first one was in High Studies in Political Management and Governability, from the George Washington University, Universidad del Rosario and Corporación Andina de Fomento, CAF; a second diploma in Formulation and Evaluation of Investment and Social Projects, from Escuela Superior de Administración Pública, ESAP; and the third diploma in Prevention of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of boys, girls and adolescents, from Universidad de Cartagena, Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli, CISP, and the Colombia Presidential Agency for the International Cooperation. She has been also working on vulnerable communities for the last nine years, through the Atlantic Department Corporation of Volunteer Associations, CODAFE, in which she was the Vice-President of Community Development for the last two years.

In 2014 she was assigned as the Head of Humanities in the Engineering Faculty, at a well-known University in Barranquilla, with the responsibility of supervising, among other activities, the academic results of its English outsourcing contract, a variety of subjects in the field of social sciences and humanities, and a number of undergraduate professors. Additionally, she is the Delegate Coordinator of the social internship that students of the ninth semester should develop in the local communities near the University.

This research in the area of Language and Culture, guided and advised by the Languages Institute, has been one of the most challenging tasks in her work and academic experience.

Importance of the Study

This study has critical importance to Universidad del Norte because it has everyday an even more diverse student population, and Colombia and the Caribbean Coast are themselves being involved in new challenges such as globalization, the Free Trade Agreements and their movements. In consonance with its policies and plans, education at Universidad del Norte must of necessity take into account the regional and national socio-economic development. Culture is the common thread within these three challenges.

In this sense, the Master's Degree in English Teaching is of great relevance to further this area of research that explores the relationship between culture and language as the foundational means of communication among the different kinds of global negotiations.

Stating of the Problem

This study was intended to determine the role of culture in learning English as a Foreign Language among a group of undergraduate students of a low intermediate or A2 English level course, via classroom observation and students and teacher interviews. It is the author's hope to contribute to the recognized literature through the analysis of the relationship between language and culture in language teaching and in language learning.

If undergraduate students at Universidad del Norte, in Barranquilla, come from towns and cities that are part of different Colombian cultural regions, and if, at the same time, all the

programs and careers are educating students to be competent in a globalized world, then teachers must be aware of the role of culture in the process of teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language.

The selection of the problem to be studied was not arbitrary, but reflected the real circumstances that Colombian society in general and the author, as subject of this work in particular were dealing with (Sabino, 1997). These considerations were also taken into account since the first moment to decide the object of research: undergraduate students, who are the center of a teaching-learning problem that has to do with education, culture and language. What this means is that this research could be defined as an attempt to solve a knowledge problem, that is, something still unknown but that could be verified (Sabino, 1997).

As Colombia is a pluri-ethnic and multicultural country, teachers should first help students to understand themselves, to be then able to understand others. The possibility of linking language and culture could then be a useful tool to allow students to take advantage of being intercultural. They would learn to interact in a positive atmosphere where any culture is subjectively rated as equal.

As said before, one of the most important pieces of the research task was its subject, with her own challenges, perceptions and doubts (Bachelard, 1976, quoted by Sabino (Sabino, 1997). The author was conscious of her own weaknesses and strengths and thought of the possibility and advantages of having a research topic to which she felt could best contribute to this emerging body of knowledge.

The stating of the problem was based on three elements: rationale, objectives and the research-questions (Hernández, Fernández, & & Baptista, 1991).

Rationale

In our times people are facing a world without frontiers or the limitations that distances between towns and cities imposed years ago. Today, telecommunications, technology, globalization of economies and wars against everything, are factors tending toward disequilibrium. Education, as one of the most important human rights and one of the motivations human beings need to grow, is an important element tending to produce equilibrium and, inter alia, allows people to transform their life style. This is, perhaps, the most important role of education, when educators through teaching, have been able to grow their students' minds and perspectives in a positive and critical way. Teaching a language is, then, the direct medium to allow students to learn about themselves and others, as members of different cultures. The strong link between language and culture is to be found here.

All these factors, although corresponding to different dimensions are, at the same time, requiring that people develop a new competence: the cultural competence or the ability to live in harmony, learning to understand oneself and learning to understand each other. Culture involves many interesting things that shall be pointed out in the theoretical background.

This research was started with some hopes in mind: to become a contribution to other linguistic studies and, especially, those based on the relationship between language and culture and the role of culture in the development of the communicative competence on undergraduate students of English. In this respect, there were found specific foreign studies and just a few published in Colombia. This one seemed to be a great opportunity to find what was happening in our local and institutional contexts, and add to the literature.

Following traditional theories, the communicative competence involves the development of four macro-skills, two of them receptive: listening and reading and the two others, productive: speaking and writing. Now, studies about culture and its relation to language made the researcher highlight the importance of culture, as a new competence that should be mastered during the study of a foreign language. Culture is not only another competence, but perhaps a very important super-macro skill that could sustain each of the four ones mentioned before, due to its overriding effect on each of the four foreign language macro skills.

There were found two important aspects involved when defining this five macro skill paradigm: the political or legal aspects of culture and language in Colombia and the practical reasons. The manner in which the national Government defines and protects these rights through the Political Constitution, laws or public plans, were included in the former, while some practical aspects or broad conceptions of these terms in the international world were included in the latter.

Legal or political reasons

Five documents, issued by the Colombian government, were consulted to relate the topic of this work to legal or political reasons: the Political Constitution, the Law of Culture, the Curriculum Guidelines, the Ten-year Education Plan and the National Plan of Bilingualism 2004-2019.

According to the Colombian Political Constitution, culture is a human right and, at the same time, the product or result of different creations and representations. In some articles it is shown the power of the Colombian state to protect culture in these two contexts: ethnic diversity and the result of human creation through the time or history in the country. It is also mentioned that not only the state has the power, but the citizens, who have the implicit right to enjoy diversity and protect what is involved in the term culture (Bello, 1993).

And there are some other articles that, in some way, could also be mentioned when speaking about culture because of their relations to beliefs, opinions, language or different ethnic: they are included in the chapter of Fundamental Rights. In another chapter, titled Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, the Colombia Political Constitution specifically mentions culture and education, and Chapter five, titled Duties and Obligations, has also to do with the respect to culture and human rights.

As an ideal project, all schools in Colombia should be promoting the study of these fundamental principles and rights among their students and teachers and, in particular, the still unsatisfied need of learning English as the language for business and intercultural exchange.

As a consequence of this Political Constitution, issued in 1991, important developments have occurred in the national context. On one hand, there were issued the General Laws of Education and Culture in 1994 and the Law of Culture, Law 397/1997, to regulate articles 70, 71 and 72 among others.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Education issued, in 1999, the work Curriculum Guidelines for the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Primary and Secondary school. This study emphasizes, among other topics, culture as the best means of recognizing others; and according to this, it is the language, the use of a foreign language, the tool that would lead students to learn about others, their beliefs, thoughts and their contribution to the development of the world (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1999).

Then, it has been said that it is much more important to learn a second language to understand others rather than the use of the mother tongue to be understood. This argument does not reject the importance of students' culture. On the contrary, the work Curriculum Guidelines shows intercultural students, as individuals who are well involved in their own culture, and value it clearly, but, at the same time, have an open mind to be able to interact outside and accept cultural differences (p. 22).

Intercultural attitude would not only contribute meaningfully to the second language learning process but to promote tolerance, understanding and, in consequence, peace in the classroom and the world outside. For this reason, the Curriculum Guidelines also included among some methodological recommendations to be followed when teaching a foreign language, the use of a cultural based content.

It is argued here that language and culture should not be separated. The process of learning a second language is much easier when students, in a conscious way, develop effective strategies to read, listen to, speak, write, value and analyze cultures. The Colombian Ministry of Education also found that only the study of a second or more languages make students competent to interact directly and in a meaningful way, using spoken or written discourse with the members of other cultures. The result of this point of view could be the culturally competent student.

The latter argument opened the path to speak, in this work, about cultural competence as the key element that supports the communicative competence in learners of a second language.

Unfortunately, there have been some failed attempts in Colombia to protect culture and diversity through public plans, such as the Ten-year Education Plan (Mejía, 1995). However, political changes in governments have also determined changes in education. For this reason, perhaps important proposals based on culture, language or education, 'had passed without sorrow or glory' and had been erased every four years to include others that could not favor education or culture at all.

The Ministry of Education issued the Colombian National Program of Bilingualism 2004 - 2019 that has set English as a Foreign or Second Language as a strategy for the competitiveness of businesses, people and the state. This Program promotes the development of the communicative competence in all educational levels in Colombia (Ministerio de Educación Nacional República de Colombia, n.d.).

Colombian educators face the challenge of improving their mastery of the English language, as well as their students', to the levels the National Standards of English require. For this reason, the foremost teaching of this work is that language teachers should take advantage of the strong link that exists between language and culture and use it consciously to find out new strategies to develop learning.

Practical reasons

This is one of the first questions in the Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (Delors, et al., 1996) work that has to do with diversity, difference and culture in respect to the tensions caused by living together: "But how can we learn to live together in the 'global village' if we cannot manage to live together in the communities to which we naturally belong - the nation, the region, the city, the village, the neighborhood?" (p. 14). So, according to Delors (Delors, et al., 1996), the fact of living with others may generate the following kinds of tensions that should be overcome:

The tension between the global and the local: people need gradually to become world citizens without losing their roots and while continuing to play an active part in the life of their nation and their local community ... The tension between the universal and the individual: culture is steadily being globalized, but as yet only partially. ... The tension between tradition and modernity, which is part of the same problem: how is it possible to adapt to change without turning one's back on the past, how can autonomy be acquired in complementarily with the free development of others and how can scientific progress

be assimilated? This is the spirit in which the challenges of the new information technologies must be met (p. 15).

The tension between long-term and short-term considerations: this has always existed but today it is sustained by the predominance of the ephemeral and the instantaneous, in a world where an over-abundance of transient information and emotions continually keeps the spotlight on immediate problems... This is precisely the case where education policies are concerned... The tension between, on the one hand, the need for competition, and on the other, the concern for equality of opportunity (p.15)

The tension between the extraordinary expansion of knowledge and human beings' capacity to assimilate it... Since there is already increasing pressure on curricula, any clear-sighted reform strategy must involve making choices, providing always that the essential features of a basic education that teaches pupils how to improve their lives through knowledge, through experiment and through the development of their own personal cultures are preserved (p.16)

Lastly - another perennial factor - the tension between the spiritual and the material: often without realizing it, the world has a longing, often unexpressed, for an ideal and for values that we shall term 'moral'. It is thus education's noble task to encourage each and every one, acting in accordance with their traditions and convictions and paying full respect to pluralism, to lift their minds and spirits to the plane of the universal and, in some measure, to transcend themselves (p.16).

People living in our contemporary world are facing the dilemma of globalization (Delors, et al., 1996). All evidence points to the value of ethics and cultural aspects of education; such would give everyone the means to understand others in their particularity and the world in its chaotic processes to lead towards a certain kind of unity. Delors said that there is, all too often, a lack of understanding of oneself in this internal trip motivated by knowledge, meditation and self –criticism (Delors, et al., 1996).

Education for the whole life is now presented as one of the keys to access to the XXI century and the challenge to live in a permanent changing world, a world whose key words are, among others, education, culture and diversity. What, then, is the role of English here? To accomplish this mission, Delors (Delors, et al., 1996) has pointed out that education should be structured around four pillars or foundations of education: learning to live together, learning to know, learning to do and learning to be.

Geography literature and foreign languages are the subjects involved in the achievement of the goal of learning to live together, and puts teaching in the center of human diversity (Delors, et al., 1996).

To learn how to live together is of great importance because education has a double mission: to teach about the diversity of the human race and to contribute to awareness of similarities and interdependence among human beings. According to these concepts, human geography, literature and foreign languages are the subjects involved in the achievement of this goal, that is, teaching in the center of human diversity. Teaching English as a foreign language, in Colombia, or wherever, is today an opportunity to teach and work with diversity. English

classrooms, therefore, might be the context where different cultures are joined to discover learning and understanding. Students interact with teachers, other students and materials, all of them with a particular kind of cultural load that could be otherwise the origin of conflicts or tensions.

Universidad del Norte is composed of multicultural classrooms because very frequently, its students come from different Colombian states or provinces, confirming what is said in the Political Constitution: “The state recognizes and protect ethnic and cultural diversity of the Colombian nation”.

Hederich pointed out that there are five Colombian cultural regions with specific cultural patterns which determine the kind of cognitive style individuals adopt to receive, organize and process information. These cultural regions are: Andean, Pacific Coast, Pacific Valley, Higher Magdalena, Middle Magdalena that might be object of further studies in language teaching and learning (Hederich, 1999).

This work, then, is also an attempt of enhancing teachers’ awareness of the presence of different national cultures in the classroom that should be valued by them and the students. Thus the English language becomes a useful tool to be nearer to individual national cultures and foreign cultures.

Objectives

The following objectives guided this study and were taken into account during the development of the whole work to set its limits.

General

The main objective of this research could be defined as an attempt to solve a knowledge problem, that is, something still unknown but that could be verified (Sabino, 1997). The general objective is expressed as follows:

- Determine the role of culture in learning English as a Foreign Language among undergraduate students of a low intermediate English course at Universidad del Norte.

Specific Objectives

These objectives were the steps the researcher followed in order to achieve the general objective. However, as studies of methodology say, they were modified or adjusted depending on the circumstances encountered during the process of research (Hernández, Fernández, & & Baptista, 1991).

After having considered the possibility previously mentioned, the specific objectives set to develop this research were:

- Determine to what extent cultural differences could be affecting classroom interaction.
- Determine the effect of the cultural load of materials on the students' levels of learning.
- Establish the relationship between the students' levels of learning and their awareness of the cultural load of materials.

Research Questions

It is generally accepted that the problem might be also stated and structured as a central question that points to the general objective. The task of the researcher was, then, to find the answer to that question at the end of the research. This work expresses this question (Q) in this way:

Q: What is the role of culture in learning English as a Foreign Language among undergraduate students of a low intermediate English course at Universidad del Norte?

Theory of teachers' research suggests that the main question might be developed or divided into some other researchable question(s)/puzzle that should also point to the specific objectives (Freeman, 1998). These questions are:

Q1: To what extent could cultural differences be affecting classroom interaction?

Q2: What is the effect of the cultural load of materials on the students' levels of learning?

Q3: What is the relationship between the students' levels of learning and their awareness of the cultural load of materials?

Definition of Terms

This part involves conceptual definitions of key terms that guided this study and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Culture:

Sociologists have defined culture as ‘designs for living’: the values, beliefs, behavior, practices and material objects that constitute a people’s ‘way of life’ and consider it as a strategy for survival (Maconis & Plummer, 1997).

In language learning, culture is the background that supports the traditional four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing, developed in a communicative approach of language (Kramsch, Context and Culture in Language Teaching, 1993).

Language:

In language is seen from three conceptual vantage points: language as system, language as discourse and language as ideology (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Language as system “enables the language user to combine phonemes to form words, words to form phrases, phrases to form sentences, and sentences to form spoken or written texts” (p.5). Chomsky, cited by Kumaravadivelu (Kumaravadivelu, 2006) has demonstrated that

language as system is amenable to scientific analysis in the highest levels of sophistication. He incorporates the notion innateness to mean that human beings have their characteristic genetic structure that give them innate ability or an initial state of language faculty. This is the origin of the “Universal Grammar” as well as the distinction between competence and performance.

Language as Discourse is seen as that part of spoken or written language whose relationships of form and meaning relate coherently to an external communicative function or purpose and a given audience/interlocutor, as in Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000, p. 4, cited by Kumaravadivelo (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). In 1973 Halliday defined language as “meaning potential, that is, a set of options in meaning that are available to the speaker-hearer in social contexts” (p.8). For him, language is not an internal issue, as in Chomsky, but a means of functioning in society that has three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Language as ideology locates language as a site for power and domination by treating it as a transporter and a translator of ideology that serves vested interests. This concept is used in critical discourse analysis to explore the nature of input and interaction in the classroom, and goes beyond turn -taking, turn sequencing, activity types and elicitation techniques (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

The above three concepts of language show how complex it is as an object of research, and much more complex the idea of relating it to culture.

Role

It is the degree to which something or somebody is involved in a situation or an activity and the effect that they have on it (Oxford Advanced Genie Dictionary). In the Cambridge Dictionary, role is the position or purpose that someone or something has in a situation, organization, society, or relationship. This research aims to show the role or effect of culture on English language learning.

Cultural competence:

It is the conscious process of recognizing our culture, respecting others, and the ability to interact in different socio-cultural contexts.

Retrieved from the website of the National Center for Cultural Competence, at Georgetown University, cultural competence requires that organizations:

(<http://nccc.georgetown.edu/>)

- have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally.
- have the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamics of difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge and (5) adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities they serve.

- incorporate the above in all aspects of policy making, administration, practice, service delivery and involve systematically consumers, key stakeholders and communities.

Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period. Both individuals and organizations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge and skills along the cultural competence continuum. (adapted from Terry L. Cross, Barbara J. Bazron, Karl W. Dennis, & Mareasa R. Isaacs, 1989). (Cultural Competence: Definition and Conceptual Framework section, para.1).

Classroom interaction.

Allwright (1984), cited by Ellis (Ellis, 1994), has pointed out that interaction is “the fundamental fact of classroom pedagogy, because everything that happens in the classroom happens through a process of live person-to-person interaction” (565). This is to say that the interactional events that take place in the classroom might create learning opportunities, in special, those related to the development of the L2 competence.

Chapter 2: Related Research

The aim of this chapter is to find and complement theories that support the relationship between language and culture and its implications on a communicative approach of teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language. As the key point is to get sound knowledge of culture and its role on learners, this research, at the same time, should also relate culture to the students' levels of learning and their awareness of cultured materials.

First of all, it is necessary to mention that it was not easy to manage the concepts of language and culture separately because culture depends on language and culture involves language. However, the development of this chapter helped to clarify both definitions and relations between language and culture and the cultural competence involved in learning of a foreign language as well as the implications for teachers, learners and the teaching-learning process.

This chapter includes current literature as well as some classics in the field and in related fields, and starts with definitions of culture and language.

Culture

To define culture, Emily Dickinson's poem is one interesting example (Kramsch, Language and Culture, 1998):

Essential Oils –are wrung-

The Attar from the Rose

Be not expressed by Suns – alone-

It is the gift of Screws-

The General Rose –decay-

But this –in Lady's Drawer

Make summer – When the Lady lie

In Ceaseless Rosemary -

The idea is to relate nature and culture. By nature it is understood what is born and grows organically; by culture, what has been grown and groomed (from the Latin *colere*: to cultivate). To beg the question: are human beings mainly what nature determines them to be from birth or what culture enables them to become through socialization and schooling?

Dickinson's poem expresses the relationship of nature, culture and language. A generic rose is a phenomenon of nature but nature alone cannot preserve the real value of a rose.

Culture, on the contrary, forces nature to reveal its 'essential' potentialities; culture determines when it is appropriate to use a rose as a gift, for instance, because roses have a cultural meaning.

"Culture is a far-reaching dynamic concept and an elaborate, ever-changing phenomenon." Studies involving culture are very complex taking into account that they become a matter of several disciplines. And those sister disciplines also shape the kind of analysis: anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, and communication. What is important is that they all have contributed to the development of the understanding of culture, intercultural communication, and cross-cultural awareness (Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011), (p. 3).

"Each discipline has brought its own perspective to the way that we think about culture. While anthropologists view culture from the perspective of the study of human beings, sociologists view culture from the standpoint of the study of social relationships between people and groups, Psychologists consider culture from the perspective of the mind and behavior, whereas linguists consider it from the standpoint of human language. Communication specialists look at culture from the perspective of interactions or the exchange of information" (p. 3).

If culture is a toolbox of solutions to everyday problems, if it is a bridge to the past as well as a guide to the future, as Macionis & Plummer (1997) have pointed out, then culture should be considered a key element in education (Macionis & Plummer, 1997). Based on the definition of culture, these authors have mentioned that all different cultures in the world seem to have five major components: symbols, language, values, norms and material objects, described in the next lines. This is, in no way, the only approach to culture, but the challenge

was to find the simplest (Morin, 1999) and this was the reason for selecting it as a way to organize this theoretical background.

Symbols

“Human beings transform elements of the world into symbols, or anything that carries a particular meaning recognized by people who share a culture” (Macionis & Plummer, 1997). Examples of these are the red light, graffiti, winking the eye, among others. We take symbols for granted, which is the cause of shocks because individuals are unable to read meaning in surroundings (p. 100).

Culture shocks are the result of a two-way process: experiences and inflicts. The former term is used to mean the encounter of people whose way of life is unfamiliar to us. The latter is used to mean acting in ways that may well offend others.

Symbolic meanings vary even within a single society and also change over time. Manipulating them correctly allows us to engage others readily within our own cultural system. Semiotics, the study of symbols and signs, suggests that meanings are never inherent in objects but are constructed around them through a series of practices (Macionis & Plummer, 1997).

Language

As pointed out by Kramsch (Kramsch, Language and Culture, 1998) “Language is the principal means whereby we conduct our social lives. When it is used in contexts of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways” (p.3). People use words to transmit some

facts, ideas or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share. [However, words also] reflect their authors’ attitudes and beliefs, their points of view. In both cases, language expresses cultural reality (p.3).

Language also ‘embodies cultural reality’ because people use it to express experience but to create experience through the appropriate medium, written or spoken, understandable to the group they belong to.

Finally, language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value (Kramsch, Language and Culture, 1998). According to Kramsch, what this means is that speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language; they use their language as a symbol of their social identity. The prohibition of its use is often perceived by its speakers as a rejection of their social group and their culture. That is perhaps the case of minorities when they feel the forbidden use of their mother tongue is a way of rejection. This is the third aspect of language: ‘language symbolizes cultural reality’.

In the same way, language is also shaped and socialized by culture. Culture says what is proper to say, to whom, in what circumstances and through which text genres. There exist cultural conventions. These are the ways of norms of interaction and interpretation, which form part of the invisible ritual imposed by culture on language users. This concept involves the notion of cultural competence.

The link between culture and language was found in Kramsch (1988), when this author speaks about the three layers of culture: social or synchronic, historical or diachronic and the imagination. People identified as members of a social group (family, neighborhood, professional or ethnic affiliation and nation) acquire common ways of viewing the world through their interactions with other members of the same group. These synchronic views are reinforced through institutions like the family, the school, the work place, the church, the government, and the other sites of socialization throughout their lives. Common attitudes, beliefs, and values are reflected in the way members of the group use language –for example, what they choose to say or not to say and how they say it. This is a view of culture that focuses on the ways of thinking, behaving, and valuing currently shared by members of the same discourse community (Kramsch, *Language and Culture*, 1998).

The historical or diachronic view points out that people also identify themselves as members of a society where they have a place and share its past, present and its future. From this perspective, a group represents itself through its material productions over time: its technological achievements, its monuments, its works of art, its popular culture –that punctuate the development of its historical identity. All of them are preserved through the voice of some

other people that speak and write about them. This is the role of language to perpetuate culture. Both synchronic and diachronic layers of culture have been called socio-cultural context of language study.

The third layer of culture is the imagination. Discourse communities are characterized by dreams, fulfilled and unfulfilled imaginings. According to this point of view, language is linked to culture of the imagination that governs people's decisions and actions far more than we may think. As an example, it could be mentioned the Twin Towers, which were and are associated to New York or the Lincoln Memorial Building in Washington to Martin Luther King, for the words 'I have a dream' he spoke there in 1963. In Colombia, el Castillo de San Felipe in Cartagena, Hotel El Prado in Barranquilla or the Colombian Literature Nobel Prize Winner, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and their prolific stories covering more than hundreds of years.

Language as a system of symbols used to communicate, involves spoken and written words, which are culturally variable and composed of the various alphabets and ideograms used around the world. This concept is related to the ethnicity boom, or a widespread awareness of different ethnicities having their own languages, often generating conflicts. It is also said that language is the major means of cultural reproduction, that is to say, the process by which one generation passes culture to the next (Macionis & Plummer, 1997).

Another important aspect of language as symbol is that different cultures experience the world in a different way. For this reason, it is not easy to find the same words or expressions to mean the same in different languages. Every language has its own load of emotions and every

language shapes reality in its own particular way. “The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis states that people perceive the world through the cultural lens of language” (p. 104) (Macionis & Plummer, 1997).

Halliday and Hasan (1985) introduced the view that the way to understanding language lies in the study of texts. The terms text and context were put together as aspects of the same process. What is said and written is beyond the words. It involves the total environment in which a text unfolds. The bridge between the text and the situation in which texts actually occur has been called the context. And according to this perspective, the context or situation is prior to the discourse that relates to it. On the other hand, they defined text as “language that is functional”. By functional, they meant language that is doing some job in some context, as opposed to isolated words or sentences. In this sense, function equals use (Halliday & Hasan, 1985).

However, Halliday and Hassan (1985) prefer to consider it as the study of meaning in its most general sense, or the study of sign systems. For them, culture is defined as a “set of semiotic systems, a set of systems of meaning, all of which interrelate” (p.16) and language was one among the many ways of meaning that exist in any culture, being the terms social and culture, synonyms. In this way, they relate language and culture as the centre of the social-semiotic perspective of language (Halliday & Hasan, 1985).

According to the social-semiotic perspective in Halliday and Hasan (1985), language is one among a number of systems of meaning that, taken all together, constitute human culture (Halliday & Hasan, 1985).

Values and beliefs

Values are the abstract standards people have about what is good and bad, which vary from culture to culture. There are prescriptive values: statements what ought to be in ethical and moral terms. They are the broad principles that underlie beliefs.

Beliefs are specific statements that people hold to be true or particular matters that individuals consider to be true or false.

Norms

Norms are rules and expectations by which a society guides the behavior of its members. They can be proscriptive or prescriptive. The former mandate what we should not do and the latter spell out what we should do. Most norms are applied anywhere at any time while many others are situation specific (Macdonis & Plummer, 1997).

It has been recognized that some norms are more crucial than others to our lives. This difference creates yet another subset, mores and folkways. Mores are the standards of proper moral conduct that distinguish between right and wrong. Among these are all norms essential to maintaining a way of life which are defended publicly, apply to everyone, everywhere, all the time. An example of this is the prohibition of sexual abuse of underage children. On the other hand, folkways are the customs for routine, casual interaction in society that draw a line

between right and rude: for instance, proper dress, appropriate greetings and common courtesy (Sumner, cited by Macionis & Plummer, 1977) (Macionis & Plummer, 1997).

Material culture

This component has to do with all the tangible human creations that sociologists term artifacts (Macionis & Plummer, 1997). They are individual objects created, adopted, or adapted by members of the culture. According to Moran (2001), artifacts are the things of the culture, commonly known on language teachers as “realia” and “authentic material”. Due to trade, emigration, intercultural exchange, conquest, colonization, displacement, and other international interactions, many artifacts are imported and exported among cultures and nations. Some examples are the Japanese kimonos or the Nigerian wooden masks. Currency or money, newspapers or footwear are also considered among artifacts that are adopted or adapted across cultures (Morin, 1999).

Culture and Language Teaching

As found in theory, language could not be separated from culture and culture itself needs language to survive. How could these two concepts be combined or related in the classroom? Traditionally, it is supposed that all human beings can understand each other provided we have the same code; so, all we have to do is to learn that code (Kramsch, 1993) to get the consensus and negotiated understanding. But it is widely known that culture means difference, variability,

and always a potential source of conflict when one culture enters into contact with another (Kramsch, *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, 1993).

This approach emerges in this work, supported in Kramsch, among others, when the classroom teacher and learners have to deal with a variety of Colombian cultures, while at the same time, they teach/study the foreign language with its four traditional macro skills, and culture. This is also the point of view shared by (Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011): “the English language classroom is a place where different cultures interact. When students arrive in language classrooms, they bring with them their own cultural background and experiences, which may differ from those of their teachers and classmates” (Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011) (p. 2)

This research is focused on the nature of L2 classroom discourse, as the visible product of learning. Ellis (1994) has stated that classroom discourse “mediates between pedagogic decision-making and the outcomes of language instruction” (573). He cited the model shown by Allwright and Bailey (1991) when they talked about classroom interaction as the classroom events generated by different components such as: syllabus, method, atmosphere, input, practice opportunities and receptivity (Ellis, 1994).

Ellis (1994) has made relevant the nature of the social relationships teachers want to encourage, that is, the atmosphere. And he stated that when acted on, plans result in classroom interaction. What is important here is that this result is co-produced with the learners, because they are provided with opportunities to encounter input or to practise the L2. Besides he states that “it also creates in the learners a state of receptivity, defined as an active openness, a

willingness to encounter the language and the culture”. For this reason, this author has pointed out that interactional events with social goals “provide opportunities for them (learners) to initiate discourse and to perform a wider range of language functions” (p. 578).

Kramsch (1993) has argued that (Kramsch, *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, 1993)

teachers and learners are often not aware of the cultural nature of their discourse [...] the increasingly multicultural nature of foreign language classrooms and the hesitations of many teachers to recognize deeper misunderstandings due to social and cultural factors, are making the foreign language class as complex as the traditional ESL class (p. 43)

Learners interacting in a multicultural classroom could adopt different roles that, at the same time, could generate opportunities to negotiate meaning, producing learning in a foreign language.

Relating culture to classroom, it has been pointed out that (Kramsch, *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, 1993):

Culture in language teaching is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them (p. 1).

Taking into consideration the differences human beings can have (age, race, gender, social class, generation, family, history, regional origin, nationality, education, life experiences, linguistic idiosyncrasies), communication in a foreign language should be all but impossible. And the possibility of understanding would then be very often temporary and imperfect.

So the motivation of this research is not only the conviction of the importance of learners' cultural variability, but particular meanings and contextual meanings instead of universal meanings.

(Kramsch, Context and Culture in Language Teaching, 1993) has also pointed out that:

Understanding and shared meaning, when it occurs, is a small miracle, brought about by the leap of faith that we call 'communication across cultures'. As it has been mentioned, classrooms are not separate from cultures; in fact, classroom teaching is a juggling act that requires instant-by-instant decisions based on both local and global knowledge and on an intuitive grasp of the situation. (p.3)

As part of the linguistic heritage, it has been said that teaching language is teaching the four skills 'plus culture'. But language is not the means to transport information about culture. Culture is a feature of language itself, as studied in (Kramsch, Context and Culture in Language Teaching, 1993):

Cultural awareness becomes an educational objective in itself, separate from language.

If, however, language is seen as social practice, culture becomes the very core of

language teaching. Cultural awareness must then be viewed both as enabling language proficiency and as being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency (p. 8)

This kind of conception could be very useful when teaching EFL in multicultural classrooms. But this question still remains:

Given that we want to teach language in such a way that learners are initiated into its social and cultural meanings, how many of these meanings must be made explicit, how many can be understood implicitly? How can a foreign way of viewing the world be taught via an educational culture which is itself the product of native conceptions and values? Once we recognize that language use is indissoluble from the creation and transmission of culture, we have to deal with a variety of cultures, some more international than others, some more conventionalized than others (p. 9)

As Richards and Bolke (2011) have argued, it is necessary to create a culturally sensitive classroom. They have pointed out that “teaching students with different cultural backgrounds requires particular levels of sensitivity and awareness” (p. 22). Some suggestions that could help are mentioned by Dorney (2001, cited by Richards & Bolke, 2011), and consist of “develop the learners’ cross-cultural awareness systematically by focusing on cross-cultural similarities (and not just differences) and by using analogies to make the strange familiar and, supplement your textbook with authentic materials” (p. 23). This could favor the awareness of the cultural load of materials (Richards & Bohlke, *Creating Effective Language Lessons*, 2011).

What is shared in this work is that cultural awareness and sensitivity into the lesson and classroom should be intentionally built.

As culture becomes the very core of language teaching, this work also found necessary to research about levels of learning and associate them to cultured materials and to the awareness of that cultural load of teaching materials. These data are supported on the cultural awareness as educational objective in itself, separate from language that has already been analyzed (Kramsch, *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, 1993).

Levels of learning are one of the predetermined categories that were set for objective two of this work and are supported in the findings of the study developed by some linguists in Colombia: Ávila, Barletta, Carreño, Chamorro, Mizuno, Moss, and Tapia (Colectivo Urdimbre, 2000), who in their book, *Libros de texto y aprendizaje en la Escuela*, have pointed out that the process of learning is not linear but it has forwards and backwards like the pendular movement. To analyze the levels of learning, they organized discourse produced by students in 72 class hours, to find, through the language of answers, the level of learning they had. Their research used the language of texts of Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, in primary schools (Moss, et al., 2000).

These authors have categorized four different levels of learning, based on the characteristics of answers. The first one was the initial or lowest level of learning when students produced wrong answers; the second level of learning showed mechanical recitation in the students' answers, because they just swallowed knowledge and regurgitated it; then, the third level of learning was the academic comprehension, when students were able to paraphrase and use synonyms, demonstrating a kind of understanding; and the fourth level of learning was the

experiential knowledge, that usually connects knowledge to own experiences. These levels of learning are used in this work to explain table 3.17 and next pages.

It was found that the cultural load of teaching materials could be seen through the cultural topics included in syllabi organized in four aspects of culture:

Language, culture and Pragmatic competence

Looking for an answer to what Kramsch argued in the last quotation, it was found in Rose and Kasper (2001) that Pragmatics should be explicitly taught in the classroom so that students could understand how different the use of L1 to L2 is. Culture makes the difference here. Teachers cannot assume that the mastery of L1 use means that students will know the appropriate use of L2, because students need the teachers to help them to be aware of cultural differences (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

Coming back to the first part of this chapter, the communicative approach is an assumption of the prevalence of the pragmatic competence over the linguistic competence. It is supposed that students would be developing the latter as they are being competent in the former. In this sense, the concept of competence might be considered the point of departure to clarify the kind of language a teacher could expect his/her students of English as a foreign language to produce.

Competence has been defined as “*learning to do in a specific context*”¹ (Vincent, M. 1999). And to be competent in a foreign language is to be able to use it to relate knowledge, understand and interpret the reality surrounding individual and share ideas, feelings and opinions in communicative situations where it is necessary to follow certain linguistic and social patterns, in accordance with the cultures involved.

There are some other definitions that relate language to use, and use means a certain knowledge and awareness of culture. Campbell and Wales (1970) and Hymes (1972), cited by Rose and Kasper (2001), conceptualize communicative competence as “the knowledge of rules of grammar, on the one hand, and rules of language use appropriate to a communicative situation, on the other” (p. 64) (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

Definitions of communicative competence tend to include (among other things) at least two components: a code component, which describes a language user’s knowledge of syntax, morphology, semantics, lexis, and phonology; and a use component, which describes a language user’s ability to use language appropriately for a purpose within a given context. (p. 63)

Those aspects were also studied in (Halliday & Hasan, 1985) perspective when they talked about the functions of language as the way people use their language, or their languages if they have more than one. To succeed in this task, they have pointed out this:

¹ Researcher’s free translation from Spanish language.

Much of the work of learning a foreign language consists in learning to make the right predictions. If the student coming into school with a first language other than English finds difficulty in using English to learn with, this is likely to be in part because he/she has not yet learnt to expect in English –to use the context in this predictive way.

The context of situation, however, is only the immediate environment. There is also a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted: its context of culture... (p. 46)

(Halliday & Hasan, 1985) have also said that “the school itself provides a good example of what in modern jargon could be called an ‘interface’ between the context of situation and the context of culture” (p. 46).

Language as a means of communication or interaction

The communicative approach understands language as a means of communication, that is, the means of interaction, where oneself experiences push towards different kinds of doubts, judgments, intentions or attitudes in others (Vincent, 1999). This is the kind of Discourse, used by Gee to refer, not only to ways of speaking, reading and writing, but also of behaving, interacting, thinking, valuing, that are characteristics of specific discourse communities (Cited by Kramsch, 1998) and that are the skills the students should develop in the classroom (Kramsch, Language and Culture, 1998).

Bachman described the language components in two macro abilities: organizational competence, which includes the study of grammatical and textual competences, and pragmatic competence, which includes the study of illocution and socio-linguistic competences (Cited by Republic of Colombia, Ministry of Education, 1999). This work is focused on the second type of ability, pragmatic competence that makes reference to the functional use of language, what means the use of language taking into account the context in which it is used.

This approach has been followed, because of the characteristics of illocution and socio-linguistic competences, and their close relations to culture, the core concept involved in this research. The Colombian Ministry of Education (1999) in Curriculum Guidelines mentioned that the first competence includes: ideational functions, to express ideas and emotions; manipulative functions, to get things done; heuristic functions, to use language when teaching, learning and solving problems; and imaginative functions, to be creative. On the other hand, socio-linguistic competence considers aspects such as the sensibility towards dialects and registers and the cultural referent comprehension, among others (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1999).

Having assumed the previous features, Pragmatics became an important field to support this dissertation, especially once finished the process of collecting and analyzing data. As Yule (1996) has pointed out, “Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)” (Yule, 1996), (p. 3).

Yule (1996) conceives Pragmatics in four different aspects: “Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning... Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning...Pragmatics is the study of how more gets communicated than is said... and Pragmatics is the study of the expression of relative distance” (p.3).

This discipline will be useful, further, to analyze pieces of discourse within the pragmatic perspective, a less common task than the structural perspective.

In order to do pragmatics of discourse, we have to go beyond the primarily social concerns of interaction and conversation analysis, look behind the forms and structures present in the text, and pay much more attention to psychological concepts such as background knowledge, beliefs and expectations. In the pragmatics of discourse, we inevitably explore what the speaker or writer has in mind (p. 84).

Coherence

As mentioned by Yule (1996):

...generally, what language users have in mind is an assumption of coherence, that what is said or written will make sense in terms of their normal experience of things. That ‘normal’ experience will be locally interpreted by each individual and hence will be tied to the familiar and the expected (p. 84).

The emphasis on familiarity and knowledge is the basis of coherence because we tend to make instant interpretations of familiar material and tend not to see possible alternatives. This is the way people react when listening or reading something about what they have “some common cultural knowledge”, as it has been called by Yule (1996, p. 85). In this case, individuals assume errors as truth or “fill in” details where it is necessary to complete the interpretation.

Background knowledge

The common ability to arrive automatically at interpretations of the unwritten and the unsaid based on pre-existing knowledge structures is known as background knowledge. “These structures function like familiar patterns from previous experience that we use to interpret new experiences. The most general term for a pattern of this type is schema...” (p. 85). A schema is, then, a pre-existing knowledge structure in memory that has to do with culture and ideology.

In the same way a fixed, static pattern to the schema is called frame, it could be considered that shared frames within a social group constitute a prototypical version or cultural patterns, frames or prototypes that influence individuals’ assumptions of the real world.

Cultural schemata

As Yule (1996) has pointed out, “it is almost inevitable that our background knowledge structures, our schemata for making sense of the world, will be culturally determined. We develop our cultural schemata in the contexts of our basic experiences” (p. 87).

Cross-cultural pragmatics

A better way of teaching a foreign language could be through the teaching of the language itself and the culture surrounding it. If students are not considered as empty boxes but as individuals with important knowledge of the world and their own expectations, it is necessary to accept that differences in expectations are based on cultural schemata. The study of these differences is part of a broad area of investigation known as cross-cultural pragmatics. Examples of these are the cultural preferences for not saying what you know and the related powerful role of silence within the normal conversational practice.

This thesis is based on the communicative behavior of non-native speakers, attempting to communicate in their second language. This is described as interlanguage pragmatics (Yule, 1996).

Chapter 3: Methodology

In traditional research methodology, this work should be classified as a qualitative study taking into account the relativity of knowledge, the subjectivity element and that outcomes generated cannot be applied to contexts or situations beyond the class where data were collected. In fact, it is focused on the understanding of a complex phenomenon such as the relationship between language and culture, exploring it from the perspective of the participants, students, in their natural ambience, the classroom, and relating them to their sociocultural context (Hernández, Fernández, & & Baptista, 1991).

Using this approach the author pretends to get a sound knowledge about the problem of research through students' experiences, perspectives, opinions, meanings or their subjectivity to conceive their reality. Besides it was considered the lack of research about this specific topic in the local context.

As in any qualitative study, this research was addressed without controlled variables. Instead, there was a place for emergent categories that made its author refine the process and hypothesis while more data were uncovered.

As the interest of the researcher was not to generalize, but to get a sound understanding of the problem, the size of the sample was not relevant. Instead, much more important was the where and how of the process of research, which made this qualitative work match the characteristics of an ethnographic method, one of the research traditions used in applied linguistics.

Nunan (1992) has pointed out that “ethnography seeks to obtain insights into the classroom as a cultural system through naturalistic, uncontrolled observation and description” (Nunan, *Research Methods in Language Learning*, 1992), (p. 3). Citing Watson-Gegeo and Ulrich, he also shares:

in particular the contextual characteristic which focuses the research in real situations and settings where people actually live and work rather than in laboratory or simulated settings. Within this context the research focuses on the cultural meanings revealed by the behavior of the subjects under study (p. 54).

It was necessary a hard work of description, analysis and interpretation of data collected.

The next table summarizes the characteristics of ethnographic research (Nunan, *Research Methods in Language Learning*, 1992):

Table 3.0.

Characteristics of Ethnographic research

| Characteristics | Gloss |
|-----------------|--|
| Contextual | The research is carried out in the context in which the subjects normally live and work. |
| Unobtrusive | The researcher avoids manipulating the phenomena under investigation. |
| Longitudinal | The research is relatively long-term. |
| Collaborative | The research involves the participation of stake holders other than the researcher. |
| Interpretative | The researcher carries out interpretative analysis of the data. |
| Organic | There is interaction between questions/hypotheses and data collection/interpretation |

Note. Taken from “Research Methods in Language Learning” by Nunan, 1992, p.56.

Participants

This study included 17 undergraduate students of English Language in the fourth level (low intermediate) at the Languages Institute at Universidad del Norte. These students, enrolled in different academic programs, were middle social class and came from different regions of the country. They were between 17 and 22 years old.

The classroom teacher also participated in this study.

Instrumentation

The instruments applied to complement the classroom observation and collect data were: audio-records, transcriptions, field notes, a questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews.

Audio - record.

This instrument let the researcher obtain data in real time and make further revisions of the utterances and language aspects to be analysed. Although it was a very important tool to develop the field work, the recommendation for researchers is to have an audio-record player with built-in conference microphone and the best technology to record even the lowest sounds in the classroom and to be able to reproduce or download the material with modern programs or software in their personal computers.

Field notes.

The field notes were very useful to write about all the details observed in the teaching and learning process: perceptions of the researcher, attitudes or body language of students, for instance, that could not be recorded on the tape used and that helped during the analysis of the data. Hence this tool was a valuable complement to the audio records. This is the kind of

instrument that materially assisted the researcher to take subjective notes about the environment where the classes evolved.

At the end of the classes, field notes were also used to interview the classroom teacher and five students selected to get more information, so that they could feel free to talk and express their opinions. In this case, the field notes were a more suitable instrument than the audio record.

The Questionnaire for the students

As soon as the first class finished, the researcher delivered a questionnaire to the students. This instrument had the intention of verifying directly from the students' answers those aspects that were observed during the class and to obtain additional information about the group. It was designed in Spanish so that the students could understand all the questions easily. It took five minutes to answer it, before a practice at the languages laboratory, and the students were asked not to sign it. The questionnaire had twelve questions. See [Appendix 1](#).

Semi-structured interviews to the classroom teacher

The classroom teacher was interviewed twice in order to know her perceptions about the materials, topics studied and the students' participation or interaction in class. See [Appendix 2](#).

Semi-structured interview to five students

Five students that had demonstrated particular interest in English classes or had clear attitudes towards cultural topics and particular behaviours in the classroom were selected to be interviewed. The semi-structured interview consisted of an informal questionnaire with a few basic questions that guided the teacher researcher during the face-to-face interview or conversation.

Students were interviewed in Spanish and the flow of the conversation or answers determined the next series of questions. This means that depending on students' answers it was necessary to ask in depth about their opinions or beliefs. For this reason the interviews may have different appearances or contents.

General questions to search for personal data were the common point in all these interviews. This informal procedure made the students speak freely about themselves while the conversation shifted to the point of language and culture, showing the validity of the semi-structured interviews used as instrument or research.

It was considered necessary to start this task with Student No. 1, because he was not only the most active participant but the most controversial individual. Thus he was the parameter to determine the rest of the semi-structured interviews or conversations. See [Appendix C.](#)

Transcriptions

Five classes were completely recorded and transcribed using a four column format in Microsoft Word: Number of turn-taking, subject, discourse and category. See [Appendix 4](#)

Turn-taking was numbered in a sequence, pointing most of the time alternative participation of the class teacher and students. The column marked as subject, indicates the moment when the class teacher, named as T, or students were speaking. Students were also numbered as S1, S2, S3 and so on, to avoid mentioning their real names.

In the Discourse column were transcribed the words students and teacher used during the classes in their spoken language.

The fourth column named “category” includes some key aspects to be evaluated in the next chapter and that contribute to support the specific objectives established for the research. For the analysis of objective one, “Determine to what extent cultural differences could be affecting the classroom interaction among the students”, there were established these categories: respect, collaboration and participation. To achieve objective number two, “Determine the effect of the cultural load of materials in the EFL classroom”, the established categories were: quality of language, interest in topics and cultural schemata. For the third objective, “Establish the relationship between learning the L2 and the students’ awareness of the cultural load of materials”, there were selected these categories: awareness of the cultural load of materials and learning level.

Procedure

The following was the procedure the researcher followed to complete this study:

- The tutor and the researcher planned and selected the classroom to be observed.
- Before the classroom observations the researcher had a previous talk to the classroom teacher, to be familiarized with the materials, lessons and English level of students.
- The tutor suggested six separate times for classroom observations.
- The first tools selected were the audio record and the notebook.
- The researcher started the field notes during the first class observed.
- The questionnaires were applied after the classroom observations to students and teacher.
- Transcripts of the audio-records were done at the end of the observations.
- The data collected through the respective instruments were analyzed.
- The results of the analysis or findings were produced.

Analysis of Data and Results

The first revision of the theoretical background focused the researcher on the relevance of classroom interaction, in particular, to conflicts caused by the presence of different cultures in the classroom. During the classes observed, it was evident that those students, that were participating in this study, came from different Colombian cities or regions and that some

difficulties and fights were causing any tension in their English class, as (Kramsch, Context and Culture in Language Teaching, 1993), (Delors, et al., 1996), and (Yule, 1996) had pointed out.

It was also found that there were some moments when students increased their level of participation, improving perhaps their communicative competence in English. It was necessary to verify, through the class observations, the other instruments applied, the analysis of data collected and their results, if the cultural load of materials had any incidence in the increase of levels of learning and if students' levels of learning was connected to their awareness about the cultural load of materials.

It was very interesting to find what Kramsch (1993) says about the role that culture plays in the process of teaching and learning the four linguistic skills. Culture is not just one more skill to be learned separately (Kramsch, Context and Culture in Language Teaching, 1993). It makes evident the "limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them" (p. 1).

Kramsch also considers the term intercultural to "refer to communication between people from different ethnic, social, gendered cultures within the boundaries of the same national language" (p. 81) as one of the challenges in teaching (Kramsch, Language and Culture, 1998).

It was necessary a very sound and long revision of the theoretical background and the information collected through the instruments applied: students' questionnaire, the teachers' interview, unstructured interview to five students and the transcription of audio-recorded in classroom observations. As a result of this analysis, there were used several tables for the

different instruments to organize the findings. The data and results collected are shown in the next tables, with supplementary analysis, when required, to make them clearer to be shared with the academic community.

The students' questionnaire

Students' questionnaire had 12 questions. The first six questions were included to know about demographic characteristics of the 17 students, because this information could be relevant for this ethnographic study. Table 3.1 shows the result of the first question about student's age. (APPENDIX A).

Table 3. 1.

Students' age

| Age | No. of Students | Percent |
|-------|-----------------|---------|
| 18 | 5 | 29 |
| 17 | 4 | 23 |
| 19 | 3 | 18 |
| 20 | 2 | 12 |
| 21 | 2 | 12 |
| 22 | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 17 | 100 |

Most of students, 29%, were 18 years old. The questionnaire determined that they were all at the fourth semester and perhaps started their academic career when they were just 16 or 17

years old. The age could be an important variable when analyzing how mature students were in their awareness of the cultural load of material or the role of culture on their learning process.

Table 3. 2.

Students' undergraduate programs

| Program | No. of students | Percent |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Psychology | 7 | 41% |
| Business Administration | 3 | 17% |
| Economy | 2 | 12% |
| Electrical Engineering | 2 | 12% |
| Civil Engineering | 1 | 6% |
| Industrial Engineering | 1 | 6% |
| Mechanical Engineering | 1 | 6% |
| TOTAL | 17 | 100 |

It was observed that most of students, 41%, were students of Psychology who were always sitting together. After talking to the classroom teacher and the tutor, the reason for this preference could be that, traditionally, most of undergraduate students of Psychology are women and they usually attend other subjects together. So, they prefer to be sitting together in their English classes, too, instead of interacting with other students. There were found two factors to be considered here as relevant in the classroom interaction: the fact of being female and the fact of being female students of Psychology. Although this was not the main topic of the thesis, this aspect could be taken into account as an important cultural variable because in Colombia, the decision about the kind of career could also be related to the cultural region and familiar factors or decisions influencing very young students. Perhaps their parents considered that Psychology

was the most appropriate career for their daughters, these seven students or they preferred this career to any other in which they had to deal with mathematics. Particularly in this classroom, these female students showed their femaleness and delicate manners that contrasted with the ones of the male students.

Table 3.3.

Semester of students

| Semester | No. of Students | Percent |
|----------|-----------------|---------|
| 4o. | 9 | 53.0% |
| 2.o | 4 | 24.0% |
| 1o. | 2 | 11.5% |
| 6o. | 2 | 11.5% |
| TOTAL | 17 | 100.0% |

At the moment of this research students had had a total of 240 hours of English classes and their language production corresponded to the first level of a pre-intermediate course.

At Universidad del Norte, students have a period to decide when to start English classes. However, there was found a correspondence between the level of their academic careers and the English level among most of students: 53%, who were in the fourth semester. This data could mean that they started English as beginners, when they were in the first semester, or that they did not know any English when they were admitted to Universidad del Norte.

There was also found that 24% of students who were taking this pre-intermediate level of English were in the second semester of their academic careers, that is, their English level was

more advanced than their academic level in their careers and more advanced than most of students in that English class. At the same time, there were found two students, 11.5%, in the first semester while, on the contrary, two more, 11.5%, were already in the sixth semester of their respective programs. There were no students in the fifth semester. This very heterogeneous class could cause difficulties in students' interaction.

Table 3.4.

Students' place of birth

| Place of birth | No. of Students | Percent |
|----------------|-----------------|---------|
| Barranquilla | 10 | 60% |
| Cartagena | 2 | 10% |
| Bogotá | 1 | 6% |
| Medellín | 1 | 6% |
| Montería | 1 | 6% |
| Santa Marta | 1 | 6% |
| Sincé | 1 | 6% |
| TOTAL | 17 | 100% |

When asking students about their place of birth or residence, it was found a variety of regions or cities in Colombia. 60% of the students included in this study were born in Barranquilla and were studying in this city perhaps because most of them prefer living in their hometowns. On the other hand, 40% of students came from other cities: 10% of students were from Cartagena, the closest city to Barranquilla, and the rest of them, 30%, came from Bogotá, Medellín, Montería, Santa Marta and Sincé. These cities have cultural contrasts based on ethnic, social or familiar characteristics that could mark cognitive differences and ways of

socializing, as Hederich pointed out in his book about the existence of cultural regions in Colombia (Hederich, 1999).

Table 3.5.

Have the students always lived in Barranquilla?

| Answer | No. of Students | Percent |
|--------|-----------------|---------|
| No | 9 | 53 |
| Yes | 8 | 47 |
| Total | 17 | 100 |

Although most of students were born in Barranquilla, 53% of the 17 students had not always lived in this city. According to this data, they could have the influence of other regions.

Table 3.6.

Places different from Barranquilla where students had lived before

| City | No. of Students | Percent |
|-----------|-----------------|---------|
| Cartagena | 3 | 34 |
| Bogotá | 2 | 22 |
| Sincelejo | 2 | 22 |
| Montería | 1 | 11 |
| Sincé | 1 | 11 |
| Total | 9 | 100 |

Students answered about the place but not about how long they lived there: This data shows that the students have been influenced by different cultures during their lives.

Table 3.7.

Different students' groupings

| Groupings | No. of Students | Percent |
|------------|-----------------|---------|
| Pair | 7 | 39 |
| Groups | 7 | 39 |
| Individual | 4 | 22 |
| Total | 18 | 100 |

Summing up pair and group work, 78% of students preferred to work with their classmates, which could mean a preference for the activities that promote classroom interaction and cooperative learning. As it could be observed, one of the students marked two options: individual and pair work.

Table 3.8.

Preference of classmates to work in class

| Preference | No. of Students | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Any | 13 | 76 |
| Students of the same career | 4 | 24 |
| Total | 17 | 100 |

Although students said that they do not have any preference to work, when selecting the students for their pair or groups during the classes, it was observed that the students of psychology desired to work together. In fact, the researcher noted that in every class the

students organized the chairs in the same way: they did a semi-square and the female students of psychology always sat together.

Table 3.9.

Topics remembered

| Topic | No. of Answers | Percent |
|--------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Comparative | 8 | 19 |
| Past tense | 7 | 16 |
| Present continuous | 5 | 12 |
| Direct/Indirect questions | 5 | 12 |
| Present perfect | 4 | 10 |
| Been | 3 | 7 |
| Superlative | 1 | 2 |
| Future tense | 1 | 2 |
| Adverbs | 1 | 2 |
| Simple present tense | 1 | 2 |
| Passive verbs | 1 | 2 |
| How to ask and answer | 1 | 2 |
| Prescriptive grammar topics | | 88 |
| Rastafarianism | 2 | 5 |
| Culture of different countries | 2 | 5 |
| Parts of the house and dress | 1 | 2 |
| Cultural topics | | 12 |
| Total | 42 | 100 |

Among the 15 topics mentioned, 12 of them or 88 % were related to prescriptive grammar as they were clearly identified by students due perhaps to the kind of practice or exercises they had had in class. However, although students were more focused on grammar, it

was observed that the kind of spontaneous participation and interaction as well as the level of learning increased when talking about cultural topics: Rastafarianism, cultures of different countries, as well as parts of the house or dress, which were the 12 % of the topics. In terms of the use of language in class, this data showed a contradiction between what students answered they remembered and the topics that made them speak more.

Table 3.10.

Interest in topics studied during the semester

| Topic of interest | No. Answers | Percent |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------|
| Comparative | 5 | 21 |
| Indirect Questions | 5 | 21 |
| Present continuous | 3 | 13 |
| Present perfect | 3 | 13 |
| Been | 2 | 8 |
| Superlative | 1 | 4 |
| How to make questions | 1 | 4 |
| Past tense | 1 | 4 |
| Passive verbs | 1 | 4 |
| Culture | 1 | 4 |
| Parts of the house/dress | 1 | 4 |
| Total | 24 | 100 |

It was found again that the students showed more interest for the Prescriptive Grammar topics, in 82%. Among the 11 topics of their interest, only two topics that represented the 8% were related to culture. This finding also contradicts what was observed in class taking into account that the students showed more interest in using English to exchange their knowledge

about culture and the parts of the house and dresses, without paying too much attention to the structure of language. This point, as well as the previous table, showed that students were not probably aware of the cultural load of materials and that they were using language to learn about culture.

Table 3.11.

Meaningful Topics to learn English

| Topic | No. of Answers | Percent |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| All of them (including culture) | 3 | 16 |
| No answer | 3 | 16 |
| Present perfect | 3 | 16 |
| Past tense | 2 | 11 |
| Present continuous | 2 | 11 |
| Past continuous | 1 | 6 |
| How to make questions and answer | 1 | 6 |
| Comparative | 1 | 6 |
| Past perfect | 1 | 6 |
| Been | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 18 | 100 |

The kind of answers found in this question showed that the students were not very aware of about how meaningful cultured material was to learn English. They did not know either about their preferences: 16% said, for instance, that all the topics, including culture, were useful for them to learn English; another 16% answered that they did not know what were the most useful topics and exactly the same percentage, 16%, answered that the present perfect or traditional

grammar topics were more useful for them. It was surprising that students did not mention cultural topics individually, as the most meaningful, in spite of having been practicing grammar through them. They thought it was a class of prescriptive grammar. These data showed that students were not aware of the cultural load of materials.

Table 3.12.

Additional comments?

| Comments | No. of students | Percent |
|------------------|-----------------|---------|
| No answer | 14 | 82 |
| Negative answer | 2 | 12 |
| Monotonous class | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 17 | 100 |

Most of students, 82%, did not have comments to this question. Only 2 students, or 12%, answered explicitly that they did not have additional comments, while 1 student, or 6%, argued that the classes were monotonous. However, it was observed that when students were discussing cultural topics they were not bored at all.

The teacher's interview

Teachers are also important participants of an EFL class because they have their own cultural basis and are part of the multicultural classroom. A good teacher should try to create a balance between co-learning and controlling the students. It is well known that students see the

teacher as an authority in his subject while they are learning meanings, beliefs, values and cultural concepts from him/her.

During the classes observed, students had two teachers. One of them, T1, was a young woman who had been working in England as an Assistant Teacher. She was interviewed twice, looked more informal during the classes than T2 and showed some aspects of her cultural background and ideology that were transcribed later. The second teacher, T2, was introduced to students during the last class and would be their oral evaluator for the final test at the end of the semester. She had a wide working experience and lived more than 20 years in New York. The role of the two teachers and materials used in class could determine the kind of participation and the behaviors or attitude the students had, as could be observed by the researcher. Teacher 1 was the teacher interviewed. APPENDIX B.

The following were the data found through the teacher's interview:

Comments about materials

The classroom teacher said that the course book did not have all the topics the learners needed to enhance their English language. She also mentioned that this was not only her opinion, but the general consensus of the other teachers at the Languages Institute. She and her colleagues considered that concepts were presented in a very fast way for EFL students and they probably did not have time to mechanize them. So she did not feel sure about how clear

students were. This situation made her to prepare supplementary material and change the way of introducing new vocabulary, concepts and topics.

Examples of why it is not the appropriate material.

As an example, the classroom teacher took Unit 2 that had Indirect Questions as the main grammar topic and she argued that the symbols used were not substantial enough for students to mechanize it, so she had to include more symbols.

Participation and production of learning

The classroom teacher answered that depending on how interesting the students found the topic, they participated and produced more oral English. According to her, if they were not interested, they did not speak. For this reason, if she saw that the topic did not favor communication, she passed quickly to a new topic. This answer also confirmed what was observed by the researcher in Class 2: students took more turns when the topic of the class was Rastafarianism.

Classroom interaction

According to the classroom teacher, students of Psychology participated less than their other classmates. She also said that these female students liked to work always together instead

of sharing with students of different undergraduate programs. She added that these students seemed to be spoiled at home and this situation perhaps influenced their behavior in class. It was also observed that most of them were shy and intimidated when students of the Caribbean Coast, specially the one from Cartagena was talking. Based on Richards (2011, these students have been called as “dependent students” due to their constant support and guidance to complete tasks.

Sitting arrangement

As it was observed, the classroom teacher confirmed that students preferred to be sitting in the same way, next to the same students every day.

The students’ attitude towards the topics included in Unit 2

Students had different attitudes or reactions, depending on the topic, as was mentioned by the classroom teacher. For instance, they did not like art because they did not have a background in it, so they did not have too much to comment. She was not surprised by the fact that her students did not talk so much about men and women to learn comparisons, nor about the snow. Although those kinds of topics could be selected depending on the group, if the teacher felt that she should teach something new, because it was part of a foreign culture, she did it. She also said that she used cultural topics when she felt a positive or at least a neutral environment. This spontaneous comment of the classroom teacher could mean that although interesting,

cultural topics are not easy to be taught and the teacher used them when she was sure about a neutral and not conflicting environment.

Do the students like going to English language classes?

The classroom teacher answered that this depended on the moment. If they had to study some other subject tests they would be probably absent. This point showed an additional challenge for teachers at the Languages Institute: How to make English language classes as important as other subjects?

Did the students enjoy any topic?

Students liked the topic about accidents, because of the anecdotes. However, they did not answer specifically that they had enjoyed this topic in the questionnaire applied, questions 9 to 11.

What about the hobbies?

Yes. Students liked this topic because of the anecdotes, too. They talked about their own experiences. This comment of the teacher was not confirmed in students' answers to the questionnaire.

And the giant trees?

No. Students did not like them.

Planning activities for the class

The classroom teacher said that she tried to connect the activities to the topics they were working on. For example, for the topic about Rastafarians, she had a Bob Marley's song.

Role of the teacher towards culture-based topics

Asking her about this topic, the classroom teacher answered that she normally spoke about her experiences in England during her time there. She mentioned that she was working there as an Assistant Teacher for about ten months, at high school, grades 12 and 13. That was between 1999 and 2000. This comment showed that cultural schemata or cultural background of this teacher could influence the way she presented the culture-based topics. Moreover, the teacher seemed to be limiting the concept of culture to what is called the target culture or the culture of English speaking countries. However, culture topics could have a wider scope if we want students at Universidad del Norte achieve a new goal: Intercultural Communicative Competence as pointed out by Moran (Moran, 2001).

The classroom teacher also added that when she did not have the answer, she tried to look for it everywhere. The most important thing was to make an attempt to explain the foreign

and target culture, peoples' beliefs and common behaviors. She talked to her students about native people. Besides, she recommended them to talk to native teachers working at the Language Institute, so that they could see their intonation and the use of expressions as "really".

About students' fighting

The researcher asked this question because it was evident that two of the students were fighting during the class about Rastafarians. The teacher answered that the cause for this fight was that Student 1 called "gay" one of his classmates. This situation was observed, in fact, as a critical case in class that could be shown as an example of conflict due to the lack of tolerance and diversity.

Unstructured interviews with five students

Student No. 1: From Cartagena. IV Semester.

Student No. 1 was born in Cartagena but he moved with his family to Barranquilla, where he attended high-school. He mentioned that he did not have problems with relocation and adapting to the new city because he adapted very easily to any environment. Because he was studying Electrical Engineering the subject he liked the most was Calculus.

It was observed that he was the most active participant in the English language classes and he confirmed this finding saying that English is necessary for him. He also said that among the topics he liked during this course were the past participle and cultures. He liked to compare cultures of different countries. For instance, he argued that it was interesting for him the way people from Jamaica lived.

He mentioned that he was interested in the way they lived, because it was different from ours. It drew his attention, the fact that Rastafarian people were vegetarian. He pointed out that he would not like to be vegetarian because he thought that they are crazy. This comment showed that this student was not yet at a comfortable tolerance level. According to him it is necessary to eat meat.

He was asked by the researcher about the possibility of being considered himself “crazy” because he ate meat and he accepted that it was probable because we are all different.

The interview was also guided to the point of cultural differences in the classroom and he admitted that to a fault. He said that he rejected “*Cachacos*”, for him, people coming from the *Santandereana* region of Colombia. He considered that in this part of the country there are bad people because according to his preconceptions these people feel themselves superior to *Costeños* or people from the Caribbean Coast. He also argued that *Cachacos* were selfish. At the same time, he said that he had not had problems with them in class because he knew that he was a student and his objective at college was to study.

Student No. 1 was also asked about cultural conflicts in the classroom and he also said that yes, and that the reason was that *Cachacos* usually had a hypocritical attitude. He

considered that one of his classmates acted in this way when he made negative comments behind his classmates.

This student continued that he not only rejected *Santandereanos* but people coming from Pereira, too, a state in the Paisa region of Colombia.

He admitted that in spite of having studied about American and Canadian cultures, he preferred to study about Colombian because, for him, Colombia has many and more interesting things than the other countries. He also recognized the armed conflict in Colombia was affecting the country.

He said that in his English language classes he had the opportunity to speak about Colombia in English and wrote about Colombian coffee, women, natural resources, as well as drugs. He felt pleased speaking and writing an article about the positive topics, but he was not aware of being using cultured topics.

Student No. 1 defined culture as what is common to a particular group of people: physical appearance, mind. “Almost all of us are brown skinned, not so tall and thin”.

About his preference to work in class he mentioned that he preferred to work with his classmates of the same career because they were his friends. And talking about materials he recommended the inclusion of different topics to be discussed between the students and the teacher, to know what others think about them. He considered that this could be a good method to know what other people think and to know if there are different thoughts, why and how. He suggested something spontaneous to show and develop skills and potentialities in English.

According to him, it was very important to think in English and to speak in English. That was what one of his aunts told him. She had lived in the USA for 20 years and spoke English very well, perfectly, and she is an American citizen. However, she visits Colombia frequently because she misses our country. This student seemed to make reference to the cultural perspective of language. He probably meant that learning English as a second language is not an easy task, not even for an American citizen, due to all the cultural connotations. He showed admiration for her aunt, the way she spoke English after living 20 years in the USA.

Talking about if he would like to go abroad, he answered that he would prefer to go to Spain, to speak Spanish, his native language. It could be assumed that in some way this student felt more confident speaking his native language in a country with probably a similar culture like Spain.

At the end he thought that he liked English, especially the use of idioms so different from those used by Colombian people.

Student No. 5: From Barranquilla. IV Semester.

This student, from Barranquilla, also studied Electrical Engineering, and was one of S1 classmates. He mentioned that he was not very good at English because in level 4 students had to speak and he was ashamed of speaking in English.

He was also asked about what topics he liked and answered cultural topics because it is a way of knowing different cultures and to learn about different countries. However, he also said

that in spite of having read a lot about culture, he was not able to participate in English class. He understood most of information he read in the foreign language.

He mentioned that it was very interesting for him to read about different cultures, India, for instance. For him, culture has to do with different traditions in the countries. For this reason, the researcher asked him about how many cultures there were in the classroom, and he answered that in the country we had one, but every home or family had its own different culture. Although this student was not aware of the existence of different cultures in Colombia, he recognized that every family could have a different culture and so could the classroom.

This was the way to connect Student No. 5 to cultural differences in the classroom and conflicts related to these cultural differences. He accepted that this was perfectly valid because it was possible that in some situations the students did not share the same ideas, what could be inconvenient.

He considered that during his English class there were no conflicts caused by cultural differences. This student acted as if he had not seen the fight between one of his classmates and his best friend who was fighting in front of him, showing the lack of tolerance towards gender and sexual preferences. Although, he thought his classmates were not conflictive, he accepted that if they talked about religion, they probably would have problems.

This only child lived with his mother and was planning to go to Spain after finishing his career because he did not want to learn a foreign language.

Student No. 17: From Bogota. IV Semester.

This student of Psychology was born in Bogotá because her father was relocated to that city. She lived happily there until she was six years old. She mentioned that she liked to co-evaluate her classmates and that she liked all topics except the passive voice.

She remembered that in her English classes she learned about Japanese and Hindu cultures and their different ways of living. Besides, she mentioned that she learned about Rastafarian, although she did not like this culture too much. When talking about this culture, she also made emphasis on that she liked to learn about other people, but she did not like to be like them. On the contrary, this student said that she liked to study comparative forms.

She defined culture as a way of life, beliefs, and she recognized herself as *Barranquillera* and a person that believed in God. However, at the end, she said in candor that she did not pay attention to this topic.

She also considered that *Barranquilleros* were spontaneous people but selfish, too, because they only thought of themselves. Besides, “once they meet you, they speak to you in the second singular person, which is not respectful”, she said.

Student No. 17 felt identified with *Barranquilleros* because she is also like them, spontaneous and talkative. On the contrary, for her, people coming from other cultures do not act in this way.

For this student *Barranquilleros* were identified by their joyful, their mood to celebrate with parties every simple fact: “if a tree was cut or if the Colombian football players lost the game, we celebrate”, she argued.

This active student considered that some of her classmates liked her spontaneity, but on the contrary, some others criticized her because they thought that she was always shouting and speaking aloud.

She liked all the activities she had in her English classes, specially the games with the classroom teacher, but she did not like the teacher she had the last day. As her classmates, she was planning to go abroad when finishing the career, but to Argentina. However, she would like to visit England some day because she liked the pictures she had seen.

Student No. 16: From Bucaramanga. II Semester

This student of Mechanical Engineer that was born in *Bucaramanga* felt well at Universidad del Norte, where he considered he had learned more English grammar. In fact, he mentioned that the topics of his preference were those related to Grammar, such as comparative forms. However, the researcher asked about other topics interesting for him, and he answered that Rastafarian was one of them, specially the way they take care of their hair and the fact that they do not eat meat. He thought this was a kind of culture. And immediately he defined culture as the group of people that have the same way of thinking, the same beliefs in gods, or the way they dress or live.

He learned at the languages laboratory that Rastafarians had different gods, pharaohs in Egypt and queens. They grow marihuana. And he also expressed that these customs were normal for him because they had always lived in this way, in the same way we have different customs. For this reason, he did not have problems accepting Rastafarianism.

He was also asked if there were just one culture or several cultures in his classroom. He answered that there were several, because there were groups that were always together, like the students of psychology. And the other group was the rest of the students. So he found two cultures distinguished by their way of sitting and interacting in the classroom.

This student besides said that the fact of having different cultures could cause problems but not in the classroom. He was planning to go to Germany as soon as he finished undergraduate studies, to be autonomous and to work there as a car designer.

Student No. 8: From Bogotá. II Semester

This student was born in Bogotá and had lived in Barranquilla just the two last years. And he clarified that he was in Santa Marta for two years, a city that he enjoyed a lot because it is calmer than Barranquilla.

He did not like crowded streets in Bogota or Barranquilla. Although he liked his home town, he had to stay in Barranquilla with his mother. He missed his *Bogotanos* friends and recognized that his friends in the capital city were different from his *Costeños* friends because those were more serious and quiet.

The topics that he liked were the present continuous and the passive voice. He clarified that topic meant grammar for him and that the other interesting aspects studied in English were those related to cultural differences of people, for instance, Rastafarianism. He wanted to know why Rastafarian people were different from us, why they liked to live in the way they lived. In general a foreign culture compared to ours.

These points showed once more that students were not aware of the cultural load of the lesson and that they separated culture from the other language skills. Student No. 6, for instance, only considered as “topics” all those aspects of grammar, but not the “interesting aspects” related to cultural differences.

This student’s opinion about Rasta people was that they were great, but different. He thought that their way of thinking and the fact that they were identified with one leader to be followed, as Bob Marley, who he considered an idol, were also interesting. It is important to highlight here that while for this student Bob Marley, a well-known celebrity of Rastafarianism is an idol; on the contrary, for student No. 1 he was no more than part of a culture in which people are crazy.

He defined culture as the way of living in society, a way of identifying a group of people. He also considered that culture was to know how to socialize and to have certain traditions.

About different cultures in the classroom, he answered that he did not notice them at all. However, he accepted that cultural differences could cause conflicts, if people did not

understand each other. He pointed out that there was nothing interesting in Colombia, but there were interesting things in Barranquilla: its Carnival and its typical food.

When the researcher insisted on asking about the meaningful topics to learn English, this student answered that world history, thoughts, likes and dislikes were good topics to speak English. It should be noticed that this student mentioned different aspects of culture, but did not mentioned the word culture itself.

He was also planning to go abroad, as soon as he finished Systems Engineering, preferable to England, to learn more English and to get graduate studies in majors related to software development.

Student No. 8 finished this interview with his own interpretation of world: “With arms wide open”. And he explained that he wanted to mean totally open to the world. “Everybody should be open to the world and know how to live in it. Learning to receive and living a peaceful life, with no problems”, he said. This was the student that was called “gay” by Student No. 1. He was probably asking for tolerance before evident differences using the metaphor of “arms wide open”. He meant that open minds could probably make world easier and that this world could then be more peaceful, with no problems, if we learn to accept others and tolerate them as they are: different from us. This was an example of “life lesson” learned during this classroom observation and research.

Classroom observations. Transcription of audio

Language used by the students in class was transcribed in the column named as “Discourse“ in Appendix D. However, the first difficulty found during this analysis was precisely that the kind of discourse seemed to be very different from natural discourse or language produced with communicative purposes. Some authors, Ellis (1994) among others, have an answer for this problem:

Classroom discourse mediates between pedagogical decision-making and the outcomes of language instruction. Teachers plan their lessons by making selections with regard to what to teach (syllabus), how to teach (method), and perhaps also the nature of the social relationships they want to encourage (atmosphere). When acted on, their plans result in ‘classroom interaction’... The interaction provides learners with opportunities to encounter input or to practice the L2. It also creates in the learners a ‘state of receptivity’, defined as active openness, a willingness to encounter the language and the culture. (573)

In fact, most of the language found corresponded to what have been called ‘teaching exchange’ or ‘IRF’, which typically has three phases, involving an ‘initiating’ move, a ‘responding’ move, and a ‘follow-up’ move (Ellis, 1994). So, a big part of discourse transcribed is a result of this IRF, for example, in classroom observation No. 4, lines 36, 37 and 38.

T: Volunteers? (Initiating)

S1: Active: My cousin eats meat every Friday. (Responding)

Passive: Meat is eaten by my cousin every day.

T: Very well. (Follow-up): evaluating act

And classroom observation No. 5 had more or less the same results in lines 10, 11 and 12:

T: Do you have signs here at the university? (Initiating)

S1: No.(Responding)

T: Ok, signs show something you have to do or not to do. These are traffic signs.
(Follow-up)

Because the purpose of this thesis is to relate culture and language and the way this relation is influencing the communicative competence of the students of English as a foreign language, it was not considered necessary to make an analysis of the structural aspects of the language which should be better developed in another work based on the organizational competence of language.

Nevertheless, it is important to clarify that the discourse that results from trying to learn a language is different from that which results from trying to communicate. Ellis (1994) has pointed out that because “the classroom affords opportunities to communicate as well as to learn, there are ‘co-existing discourse worlds’” (380). The tasks in instructional discourse are concerned with the transmission and reception of information and are controlled by the teacher, and there is a focus on knowledge as a product and on accuracy. On the other hand, natural

discourse is characterized by more fluid roles established through interaction, tasks that encourage equal participation in the negotiation of meaning, and a focus on the interactional process itself and on fluency.

Although the potential exists for natural discourse to occur in the classroom, studies show that it seldom does (Ellis, 1994).

All those previous considerations supported the idea of accepting the constraints of this work and accept that it had to be based on the oral production of the students, as a result of previous readings or spontaneous conversations developed during their participation in the topic discussions, both assigned by the classroom teacher.

As it had been said, these students were in the first step of pre-intermediate level, so the lack of L2 made them use Spanish, their L1, to express ideas as a strategy to be understood. There were transcribed, for this reason, many words or complete sentences in Spanish. Or, at the same time, there were found a combination of English and Spanish. Besides in many cases students produced incomplete sentences in English or answered with isolate words.

Pre-determined and emerging categories

Pre-determined categories were planned at the beginning of classroom observations. As it is very common in qualitative studies, some of them were found and confirmed but some others, not. This was the case of the awareness of the cultural load of material. During the planning process, it was supposed that students would be aware of the presence of culture in

their textbook and topics studied in class. However, although it was proved through the different instruments that they produced more English when talking about cultural topics, they were not aware about how motivated they were to learn and participate during these topic discussions. It was interesting, for instance, to find the different levels of learning that students achieved and showed when they were dealing with cultural topics. They perfectly identified descriptive grammar topics, but not the cultural ones, not at least with the same clarity, but a reasonable result in a lesson focused on accuracy.

On the contrary, through the different steps and analysis of this ethnographic research, emerging categories appeared, and are part of this work as a result of sound revision of the class observations as well as the transcripts of discourse produced.

Both of them, predetermined and emerging categories, are shown in the last column of Appendix D, labelled as Discourse, and are included in Table No. 3.13.

Table 3.13.

Predetermined and Emerging Categories

| Objective | Pre-determined | Emerging |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Determine to what extent cultural differences could be affecting classroom interaction. | Respect (R) Collaboration (Co) Conflict (Cf) | Disrespect (Dr) Participation (P) |
| Determine the effect of the cultural load of materials on the students' levels of learning. | Levels of learning (LI) | |
| Establish the relationship between the students' levels of learning and their awareness of the cultural load of materials. | Awareness (Aw) | |

As shown in tables 3.14, categories were set with their own indicators depending on the specific objective to be achieved. Some symbols or letters, in brackets, were used to identify the categories or indicators. They were not marked in all the transcriptions but only in the parts of

discourse connected to achieve the objectives of this work, especially those corresponding to the five students who were the subjects of additional interviews.

Table 3.14.

Categories and Indicators for Objective 1

| OBJECTIVE 1: Determine to what extent cultural differences could be affecting classroom interaction. | |
|---|---|
| Category | Indicator |
| Respect (R) | Admiration (Ad), Politeness (Pol), friendliness (F) |
| Disrespect (Dr) | Tone (T), impoliteness (Im), Rudeness (Rd), Offences (Of) |
| Collaboration (Co) | Group work (Gw) |
| Participation (as volunteers) (P) | Quantity (Qn) |
| Conflict (Cf) | Disagreement (Dg), Argument (Ar), Fight (Fg) |

The term interaction could be applied to a very large number of quite different social encounters, as Yule has said. For example, a teacher talking to students in a classroom is one kind of interaction because it is an experience where people have interpersonal verbal exchange (Yule, 1996).

As this author has pointed out, much of what we say, and a great deal of what we communicate, are determined by our social relationships. A linguistic interaction is necessarily a social interaction within the classroom itself, the setting where it takes place (Yule, 1996).

Pre-determined category: Respect (R)

As the classroom is the setting for social and linguistic interaction, it is expected that its members share the most common values that tend to establish pacific relationships. Among these values, respect is one of the most important because it is closely related to several aspects of daily life that have to do with culture: respect others, respect of difference or diversity and, of course, respect of social and institutional rules (El Tiempo, 2002).

In general and ideally, respect is involved in every life activity. Because it starts in individuals and goes towards other people and things it would be a *sine qua non* condition that in the classroom for both teachers and students, all cultures and classmates were worthy of total respect: “Nobody is tiny enough or so poor to be ignored” (Miller, cited by El Tiempo, 2002).

The Cambridge online dictionary has two definitions for the noun respect: as admiration and as honour.

- Admiration felt or shown for someone or something that you believe has good ideas or qualities. Examples: I have great/the greatest respect for his ideas, although I don’t agree with them. New teachers have to earn/gain the respect of their students.

- Politeness, honour and care shown towards someone or something that is considered important. You really should treat your parents with more respect... When you accept that different customs or cultures are different from your own and behave towards them in a way which would not cause offence. She teaches the students to have respect for different races and appreciate the diversity of other cultures.

Based on values and semantic definitions, respect has a positive side that corresponds to positive behaviours of individuals when they opt to be respectful and show admiration (Ad), politeness (Pol) or friendliness (F) in their daily interaction, as indicators used to measure this predetermined category.

During the classes, there were observed that some students expressed their respect or admiration to the teacher, calling her “teacher” or “*profesora*”. For example, student No. 10 used his native language, Spanish, to ask his teacher: “*Profesora, cómo se dice que huelen a feo?*” And later, student 2 wanted to say something, but he was interrupted: “Teacher ...” (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 1, Turn 51, 73).

In the second class observed, Student 2, 3 and 10 showed also politeness, saying “teacher” to call her instead of using her name. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 2, Turn 24, 70 and 196).

It was raining very hard when the third classroom observation started. The Classroom teacher greets the students asking them if they were cold because of the weather and gave them five free minutes before the class. Then she gave the students a paper and the rules for a grammar game about how to make indirect questions. This topic had been started during the last

minutes of the second class observed. Student 2 asked: Teacher, ¿eso qué es? (the paper).

(APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 3, Turn 2.)

Suddenly, student No. 17 arrived late, and immediately asked the teacher for her paper, saying: “Me, teacher”. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 3, turn 11).

According to Yule, politeness can be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person’s face (Yule, 1996). It has to do with respect or deference when the other is socially distant or with friendliness, camaraderie or solidarity, when the other is socially close. Face is understood here as the public self-image of a person. It was observed, for instance, that as a sign of politeness, Teacher 1 made Student 1 be aware of one of his classmate name, Lorena, instead of pointing at her with his finger. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation 3, Turn 53).

The indicator friendliness (F) was also used in this research and it was found in the female students of Psychology when they showed a very close relationship to work in pairs or to be grouped during the contest exercise. The teacher asked the students to be organized in two groups for the game, and told them that one group would make the question, and the other group would answer it.

On the one hand, during the unstructured interviews, the teacher was asked about the way the students were sitting in the classroom and she said that they generally took the same chairs. She also said that the students of Psychology worked always together; they did not want to join with students of other careers and that the reason could be they were spoiled girls. They

preferred to be sat next to their career classmates or next to their friends. (APPENDIX B, Unstructured interview with the classroom teacher, turns 8, 10 and 30).

On the other hand, when Student 16 was asked if there were one or several cultures in the classroom, he answered that there were several because there were groups that worked always together, such as the students of Psychology. Then, he realized that there were only two big groups in that class: the students of Psychology and the second group: the rest of the class. He concluded that there were two cultural groups in his class, based on friendliness and career interests. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured interviews with five students, Student No. 16, turn 16).

Emerging category: Disrespect (Dr)

Disrespect, or the lack of respect, was an emerging category associated to negative behaviours of the students in class. Among these negative behaviours there were found as indicators for the category: impoliteness (Im), tone (T), rudeness (Rd) and offences (Of).

Various factors, such as age and power, amount of imposition or degree of friendliness are often negotiated not verbally during an interaction and can result in the kind of social distance. This dynamic has influence on what we say and on how we are interpreted and interpretation might include the evaluation of students with the adjectives or indicators mentioned before.

The fact that most of the students are young adults, between 17 and 22 years old, age, in this case, could determine the kind of informality the students use in their current relationships.

However, informality should not be equated to disrespect or impoliteness. Student 1 or S1, one of the smartest in the class was, at the same time, not very polite. During the third class observed, he called his classmate in this way: “*vamos a tirártela a ti, la que está allá, de última*”, pointing her with his finger. Although he used his mother tongue, his manner of speaking showed impoliteness from the part of this student and disrespect with girls. In some cultural groups, it could be the cause of conflict because the girl’s name was Lorena. In fact, the teacher made the correction and told him: “Lorena. Say Lorena”, indicating that he was not showing respect and was inconsiderate with his classmate. It was expected that friendliness was present in their relationship. (APPENDIX D, Classroom observation 3, turns 52, 53).

It is accepted that the last example involves a subjective judgment of the researcher, which is perfectly valid in ethnographic studies and so that what is impolite for the teacher-researcher, could be normal speech for the student. Because the teacher was not only dealing with different ages but cultures, too, she and another teacher in the same situation would have to make an effort to get the balance between the tension caused by the differences and the objectives of the lesson to be achieved. Was it perhaps a tension between tradition and modernity, a means to adapt to change and to others’ evolution? Was it a tension between something spiritual and something material, or is it nothing because of the lack of ideals and values in the world? (Delors, 1996).

Above all, the conflict mentioned was caused by different perceptions of respect as human value that also involves politeness (Pol) in class. Yule, 1996, has argued that:

it is possible to treat politeness as a fixed concept, as in the idea of polite social behaviour or etiquette, within a culture. It is also possible to specify a number of different general principles for being polite in social interaction within a particular culture. Some of these might include being tactful, generous, modest, and sympathetic toward others. (p. 60)

The problem and disagreement as to this issue are that individuals are not always completely aware of the existence of those principles and they could violate them unconsciously or as a consequence of immaturity.

The following behaviour of student 1 was also categorized as example of disrespect. The teacher had divided the class into two groups for the new activity. It was a contest, so they should ask and answer correctly to earn points, using indirect questions. This activity showed clearly the indicator for tone (T) as well as group work (Gw) as it will be shown later. Again, S1 was angry because the group of girls were discussing about the best answer for their group and he interrupted them shouting in Spanish: "*Esos consensos no se permiten*" (APPENDIX D, Classroom observation 3, turn 61).

His shout was a sign of protest. It was observed that he spoke angrily and that with his tone (T) he probably wanted to intimidate the girls. He also used L1 to fight. This is, perhaps, a common behaviour in male students who discriminate against girls, as it has been learned from their families or cultures of the North Coast region. Completely ashamed one of the girls, S2 (line 62), said "We suppose" and then S1 immediately shouted addressing her: "*No, eso no es*

suponiendo” (turn 63). It seemed to be again a quarrel instead of an academic activity. (

APPENDIX D, Classroom observation 3, turn 63).

The classroom observed was also the site for upset feelings. During the same classroom observation No. 3, two of the boys, S1 and S16, were fighting in the back row. It was not possible to record their low voices to know the exact cause of their disagreement. Thus the classroom teacher was asked to determine the reason of this conflict in class. Her answer was: S1 labelled S16 as “gay”. This situation was evidence of an offence, as indicator (Of). S16 felt upset and hurt or annoyed in his feelings because S1 had shown no respect, according to the definition given by Cambridge online dictionary.

This was also validated during the second semi-structured interview with the classroom teacher, when she answered that Student 1 called his classmate “gay”. (APPENDIX B, Unstructured Interview with the classroom teacher, turn 32).

S16 felt offended due to the lack of respect about his individuality and got angry. It did not matter whether he was actually a gay or not but it was his reaction to S1 made fun of him.

In The four pillars of education, learning to live together is one of the most important tasks of modern education. Its author asks if it would be possible to conceive an education that could avoid conflicts or that could solve them peacefully, promoting the awareness of others, their cultures and spirituality. Later, the double mission of education is set as teaching diversity of the human race and contributing to the awareness of similarities and the interdependence among all human beings (Delors, et al., 1996).

This conflict implied the necessity of interviewing S1 and S16 and it was confirmed that the former came from Cartagena and the latter, from Bucaramanga, cities located in two very different cultural regions in Colombia.

To the question: ¿Hay diferencias culturales en el salón de clases? S1 answered: “Yo no gusto del cachaco. Es mala gente. Con la mayoría de las personas que he interactuado, se creen superiores a los costeños; son egoístas. En clase he encontrado cachacos. Si. No he tenido problemas con ellos. No. Uno evita los problemas porque viene aquí a estudiar y listo”.

APPENDIX C, S1, line 36.

It was evident that S1 rejected *cachacos* or people coming from that geographic and cultural region because he thinks they feel superior or better than the rest of Colombians; he added that they are selfish, too. However, he also said that he had not had problems with them. He was probably trying to evade the problem he had in class in front of the teacher researcher, so he closed his answer pointing that he avoids problems because he is only interested in studying and no more.

The contradiction in S1's comments was clearer when he answered the next question: “*Y se dan casos de conflicto en el salón de clases?*” He affirmed that, of course, there were conflicts in class and the causes were the students' manners: many times they have two faces or they are hypocritical people. To be clear, he concluded that in class he had seen one *cachaco* that is always whispering about everybody: “*Sí, claro. Es por el mismo modo de ser de las personas, que muchas veces no son de una sola cara; son hipócritas. He visto uno*

especialmente que es cachaco. Es hipócrita, habla de todo el mundo por detrás". (APPENDIX C, Unstructured interview with five students, S1, turn 38).

The teacher researcher asked for the exact meaning the word *cachaco* had for S1 just to be sure if it was the same the term had for her who used it for the people coming from Bogotá. As a surprise, this *cartagenero* called *cachaco* the people coming from *Bucaramanga*: "*No, me refiero al de Bucaramanga, porque es mala gente, igual que el de Pereira*". (APPENDIX C, Unstructured interview with five students, S1, turn 40)

This was then, evidence of the confluence of three different perceptions and cultures in the theme discussed: The teacher-researcher, who comes from Barranquilla, and the students, from Bucaramanga and Cartagena. Such makes an atmosphere of multiculturalism in the classroom.

S16 was also asked about problems caused by cultural differences in the classroom. He answered that in English classes there were two cultural groups: *¿Hay en tu salón de clases una o varias culturas?* "*Varias, porque hay varios grupos que siempre se juntan. Por ejemplo, las de Psicología. El otro somos todos los demás; hay dos grupos culturales*". (APPENDIX C, Unstructured interview with five students S16, turns 21, 22).

It was interesting to note that for this student, the student's interaction was a cultural aspect. For him, the students of Psychology, who were always sat together, were one different culture. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured interview with five students, S 16, turn 22).

Although S16 considered that the fact of being part of different cultures might be the cause of problems, he thought that in class they did not have conflicts. It was not clear if he had forgotten the fight with S1 or he declined to talk about that topic in front of the researcher. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured interview with five students, S16, turns 24 and 26).

To end the data analysis for this category, it was also found that the students, as a whole, behaved with rudeness (Rd), when they all spoke at the same time, without respecting turns or not paying attention to Teacher No. 1 when she was giving instructions at the end of the first class observed. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 1).

Pre-determined category: Collaboration (Co)

Having accepted the classroom as the formal setting to socialize and exchange information and knowledge in L2, the students were asked about their preferences to work.

The results found through the questionnaire validate what was observed during the classes. The students looked motivated and participated with enthusiasm especially in activities that fostered group work (GW). The game proposed by the teacher to practice indirect questions was an example of this kind of category. APPENDIX A.

These results were probable due to the possibility of knowledge exchange and being helped by others. It was observed the willingness of most of the students to help each other during the exercises assigned in class. During the first class there were no examples of collaboration among the students because it was developed in the IRF model. In the second one,

it could be considered an attempt of S1 to collaborate with the speed of the class, when he answered: Yes, we can (turn 26), as a response to the teacher asking if they could start with the next exercise. This was also a characteristic of this student whose identified behaviour could be a synonym of leadership because of his proficiency in L2. In some cases S1 tried to collaborate desperately to his classmates whenever they made any mistake: the teacher was asking about the details related to dreadlocks the students had discovered through their previous readings (turn 29) and S10 answered “We wash the hair only with a special shampoo” (turn 29). S1 corrected the subject pronoun using ‘they’ instead of ‘we’ (turn 35). APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No.2, turns 26, 29 and 35.

One different example of collaboration was when all the class protested due to the long discussion between S1 and the teacher. S5, in turn 85, tried to calm his classmates and stop discussion with these words: “I agree teacher. Don’t worry”. This could be a kind of collaboration to keep order in class. APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation 2, turn 85.

The fourth class hour observed was a grammar based one. At the end, the teacher asked the students to produce an active sentence and then change it into the passive voice. She only gave the instruction about the exercise but not about group work. However, immediately the girls decided to work in pairs. It was clearly noticed the intention of helping each other. This was the kind of collaboration observed. (APPENDIX D, Classroom observation 4).

A substantial number of students, as they had answered in the questionnaire, preferred to work in pairs. APPENDIX A. Classroom observation No. 5 had no examples of collaborative work.

Emerging category: Participation of Students as volunteers (P)

All the students' participations were quantified along the class hours observed to see whether the number of participations per student was directly connected with their ability to use L2 to interact in class. The researcher had labelled each of the students, whose names she had taken from the attendance list, with a number, just to omit their real names in this study. Their respective participation in the observed classes, No. 1, No. 2, No.3, No. 4, No.5, were added up to get the total result of 229 participations or 100%. From this total, it was used a math operation to get each of the students percentage of participation. This indicator is shown in Table No. 3.15, "Quantity of Students' participation (Qn)", where the results of the students selected for the case study are shaded.

Table 3.15.

Quantity of Students' Participation (Qn)

| Student | Classroom Observations | | | | | Total | % |
|---------|------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|-----|
| | No.1 | No.2 | No.3 | No.4 | No.5 | | |
| S1 | 6 | 23 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 61 | 27 |
| S2 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 16 | 7 |
| S3 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 13 | 6 |
| S4 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 3 |
| S5 | 0 | 11 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 7 |
| S6 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 15 | 6 |
| S7 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 12 | 5 |
| S8 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 5 |
| S9 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| S10 | 4 | 20 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 30 | 13 |
| S11 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| S12 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| S13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| S14 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 3 |
| S15 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| S16 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| S17 | 0 | 11 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 21 | 9 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | 229 | 100 |

According to these results, the students' percentages of participation were ranked from the highest to the lowest as it is shown in Table No. 3.16.

Table 3.16.

Students' Percentage of Participation

| Student No. | Percent |
|-------------|---------|
| 1 | 27 |
| 10 | 13 |
| 17 | 9 |
| 5 | 7 |
| 2 | 7 |
| 6 | 6 |
| 3 | 6 |
| 8 | 5 |
| 7 | 5 |
| 14 | 3 |
| 4 | 3 |
| 15 | 2 |
| 16 | 2 |
| 12 | 2 |
| 11 | 2 |
| 9 | 1 |
| 13 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 100% |

It has been said that the quantity (Qn) of participation is not a result of the proficiency of students in L2 (Ellis, 1994). However in the classes observed, the student with the best level of English (S1) was, at the same time, the student with the highest percentage of participation, that is, 27%. (See Appendix D). Nevertheless, his quantity of participation could be related to

some other factors, cultural and emotional among them. It was observed that even when he could not speak English, he preferred to use Spanish instead of being quiet or timid as some students did.

This study made the researcher think to what extent the percentage of participation was much more connected to cultural factors than to the proficiency the student had in L2, as it was the case of Student No. 1.

On the opposite side was S13 who never participated in classes. It was presumed that she was also learning although she had not overcome the silent period. However, there is “no clear evidence that the extent to which learners participate productively in the classroom affects their rate of development” (Ellis, 1994). Studies have presented mixed results and discussion still exists about whether participation causes learning or proficiency causes participation (Ellis, 1994).

Most of the students selected for the case study were also among the ones with the highest level of participation. S17 had the third percentage of participation, 9%, and S5, 7%. It is important to note that S5 had a limited level of participation and his proficiency in English was quite low. When he was interviewed he admitted that he did not want to speak in English because he felt ashamed, so he preferred the use of L1. However, it was observed that depending on the kind of discussion he felt confident to use L2 or even L1. The two others, S8 (4%) and S16 (2%), were students with good English level but on the contrary, presented a lower participation rate.

What could be concluded with these results is that the quantity of students' participation might be, then, related to their ability to interact in class and in this case study, directly connected to the cultural topics, rather than the proficiency or knowledge of the target language.

Pre-determined category: Conflict (Cf)

Based on the theoretical background, it was defined culture as a factor of conflict that could be present in the classroom. In fact, conflict was represented through disagreements, arguments or fights.

During the analysis of the classroom observations there were found examples of conflict caused by cultural differences that have been already mentioned. The Unstructured Interview was applied to see how aware five students were of culture and possible cultural conflicts. The following was the result of these interviews to Students: S1, S5, S17, S16 and S8.

S1 was very open to say that he disliked “*cachacos*” because they were bad people. He said that most of the “*cachacos*” he had met before thought they were so superior than “*costeños*” or people living in the Atlantic Coast. He said that there were “*cachacos*” in class, but that he had not had problems with them. He was aware that he avoided problems because he only was at college to study and that was all. He was also, conscious of cultural conflicts in the classroom caused by the different cultural regions. For him, the “*cachacos*” behavior that did not have one face, but were hypocritical, were one of the reasons for these conflicts.

(APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, S1, turns 35-38).

S5 recognized that there were different cultures in his classroom because each of the students came from a different family. “The cultural difference among the members of a group could cause problems because if they do not share the same ideas, they would have inconveniences”, he said. He also said that there were not problems in his classroom because they had not studied controversial topics in the classroom, like religion, for instance. This student was admitting here that disagreements could cause conflicts. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, S5, turns 15-22).

S16 expressed that where there are different cultural groups, there are conflicts, but he had not yet seen problems in his English class. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, S16, turns 21-26).

S8 thought that cultural differences could cause conflicts because it is possible that people did not understand each other.

The four previous interviews showed that although the students were aware of the conflicts caused by cultural differences, they were not aware of the cultural conflicts in their own classes, or, at least, they did not want to mention them. The cultural conflicts observed in classes have been described in point 3.4.3 which includes the complete interviews to the five case study students.

Table 3.17.

Category and Indicators for Objective 2

| OBJECTIVE 2: Determine the effect of the cultural load of materials on the students' s levels of learning. | |
|---|--|
| Category | Indicator |
| Level of learning (LI) | Wrong answers (Wa) Mechanical recitation (Mr) Academic comprehension (Ac) Experiential knowledge (Ek) |

Objective 2 has two components that were researched to find the data: the cultural load of materials and the levels of learning. As Hinkel said, culture is reflected in some ways in textbooks used for teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL). This author calls “cultural mirrors” both materials and methods used in the classroom (Hinkel, 1999).

For this research, it was used Unit 2, in “Transitions” (Lee, 1999). It is a topic-based course for pre-intermediate level students that “features English as a tool of discovery in which authentic content provides both a context for meaningful language work and a basis for the exploration of interesting adult topics”.

The title in Unit 2 was “Symbols” and the topics, or cultural content (Hinkel, 1999) connected to this research: “Determining the meaning of symbols and Exploring symbolism in culture”. Some cultured involved in this Unit were from countries or communities as Japan, Singapore, the United Nations, Jamaica, Ireland, Canada, Korea, France, Morocco, South

Africa, Spain, Jordan, India, Buddhism, Rastafarianism, among others. APPENDIX E, The textbook.

Besides, Hinkel (1999) also mentions the cultural medium or the culture of learning, what is a worthy concept to join culture and learning. Based on this second aspect students and teachers are familiarized with some expectations related to the classroom and the process of learning. Among these expectations there was found those that the teacher and students of the English lesson might have about how the texts should be used in class and about the way they should engage in the teaching and learning processes (Hinkel, 1999). (p. 196).

It was observed that cultural differences or the cultural load of materials motivated students to use more English in the classroom, fostering different levels of learning as it is seen in the next categories.

Pre-determined category: Levels of Learning (Ll)

It is said that the level of learning could be deduced, inferred or supposed through language, as a result of a complex process, because it is impossible for the researcher to get into the students' minds to know what they have learned, what they have related or where they have found meaningfulness (Moss, et al., 2000).

The following levels of learning were taken as **indicators** for this study: Wrong answers, mechanical recitation, academic learning and experiential knowledge. They are explained as follows (Moss, et al., 2000).

Wrong answers (Wa): when the students did not answer the question asked by the teacher, or they gave a wrong answer or an answer that has nothing to do with the question.

For example, the second class observed was based on an interview, published in the students' book, to Donovan Bonner, a Rastafarian who talked about dreadlocks and Rastafarianism. In one of his answers, the interviewed said: "A Rasta-man (or woman) is a natural man. A Rasta-man doesn't eat red meat, drink alcohol, coffee, or milk. Many Rastafarians are vegetarians" (Lee, 1990).

The teacher had started the lesson asking the students to make comments just to analyse the basic ideas of the text. Then, S14 said that Rastafarians don't eat meat. Immediately, S1 participated saying that "they drink coffee and alcohol or milk." The teacher asked him if he was sure, and he confirmed his wrong answer. He insisted on arguing to the teacher that based on the text he understood that Rastafarians drank coffee and milk. After a long discussion, the teacher asked the students to look for more information, as homework, because she could not convince S1 that he was wrong. This student did not know or did not understand that the negative verb was applied to the whole sentence. (APPENDIX D, Classroom observation 2, turns 49 to 84).

Two more examples for the category of wrong answers were observed in the second part of the class. The teacher wanted the students to practice how to make direct and indirect questions and she divided them into two groups to play a game. They should alternatively ask questions and answer them appropriately, and would get points for their teams.

Table 3.18.

Wrong answer examples

| Turn | Student | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 197 | S17 | The largest country in the world is America. |
| 198 | T | Ok, America is not a country. Bad answer. Question 2. |
| 199 | S17 | Do you know what the name of the French president is? |
| 200 | S5 | The name of the French president is Jacques Chirac. |
| 201 | T | So, good answer, good question. Third question: Mauricio. |
| 202 | S5 | Do you know how many teeth we have? |
| 203 | S10 | We have 32. |
| 204 | T | Question number 4. |
| 205 | S 7 | Do you know who the author of Los Miserables is? |
| 206 | S 8 | The author is Victor Hugo. |
| 207 | T | Question number 5. |
| 208 | S1 | Do you know what Marsellesa is? |
| 209 | S15 | Yo no sé esa vaina. (Some other students were whispering). |
| 210 | S15 | Himno. |

As shown in table 3.18 S17 had a wrong answer because he took America as a country and probably thought large was the same as long in English. When S1 asked: “Do you know what Marsellesa is?” S15 answered: “*Yo no sé esa vaina.*” S15 did not only know that Marsellesa is the hymn of France, but he could not even use English to answer. This student did

not realize that most of the questions in this part of the exercise were related to France.

(APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 2, turns 200, 202, 213 and 214).

Mechanical recitation (Mr), when the students gave a right answer but reproduced in an impeccable way the same words they found in their textbook, what is probably a learning strategy used to avoid a bad grade and a way to cover the lack of understanding and avoid conflict.

The students had been working on the “Read and Take Notes” section of the lesson about dreadlocks. They had solved the pre-reading part and then, they had read the interview to Donovan Bonner. For homework, the classroom teacher asked them to re-read the interview and look for information to complete a chart in their textbooks about different topics and their details found in that reading.

During the second class observed, the classroom teacher asked for a volunteer to speak about dreadlocks, as first topic and its details and S10 raised her hand. This student answered “We wash the hair only with a special shampoo from the tuna plant”. Her answer gave information about dreadlocks, in a mechanical recitation because she reproduced exactly the same words the textbook had. However, the subject for this answer was dreadlocks and not Rastafarians. So the classroom teacher used elicitation to help S10: “They are washed only with ...” And S10 could complete the last part of the sentence: “a special shampoo”. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 3, turns 29 – 43).

The puzzle exercise, on page 12 in the textbook, had more examples of mechanical recitation. The students had only to complete it without looking back at page 11, where the

interview to Donovan Bonner was. The puzzle had five sentences for the across section and five sentences for the down section. The classroom teacher started with number 3, across:

Dreadlocks have been around for _____ (how long)? S8 answered: “centuries”. Then she asked for number 4 across and S8 made the question: “Do you know where Donovan Bonner is from?” S6 answered: “Jamaica”. This kind of exercise only let the students reproduced the exact words they had read in their textbooks. So they had to use a mechanical recitation.

(APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 2, turns 147, 148, 152 and 154).

Academic comprehension (Ac), when the students paraphrased, used synonyms to express the same idea they read in their book, showing through language that academic learning is evolving to a phase of language appropriation. This stage is characterized by the kind of organization and/or particular linguistic integration and mental concepts and notions that the students are able to produce. It is clear that the students could deduce, infer, analyse, synthesize, structure their discourse through the use of connectors and organize the information taken from their textbooks.

The examples for this category were also taken from the “Read and Take Notes” section of the lesson about dreadlocks. The classroom teacher asked about the Rasta culture or Rastafarians. S14 answered: “They are vegetarians. They don’t eat red meat. They never wash their hair”. Later, the Classroom teacher said: “They wash their hair with a special shampoo. Did you read about this special shampoo?” S8 answered: “from cactus”, but the teacher elicited for a complete answer saying: “So they (take) the cactus and ... (body language). S8 said: “No. They take the plant and take a slice”. As it can be seen, S14 and S8 were paraphrasing using the

same idea their read in their book. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 2, turns 98, 103-106).

Experiential knowledge (Ek), when students apply their daily experience or previous knowledge to produce examples, explain their answers or, indeed, take a critical position before the topic discussed. This is the highest level of learning that showed that students not only assimilated the academic meanings but that these ones had started to influence their ways of observing and analysing real life in the right contexts. In this case, it was seen that the students transcended theory to touch a personal and concrete living experience.

In the first class observed, students were talking about the information they had read on the Internet about different cultures. One of them, S4, was talking about the meanings of temples in India and that there are many saints in that country. S1 immediately said that “Pamplona is similar. Thousand people come to Pamplona” as a clear reference to his previous knowledge or experience. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 1, turn 13).

After the long discussion about this controversial part of the textbook:

“A Rasta-man (or woman) is a “natural man.” A Rasta-man doesn’t eat red meat, drink alcohol, coffee, or milk. Many Rastafarians are vegetarians. We know our roots lie in Africa. A Rasta-man studies the Bible and meditates. Reggae music –Bob Marley music- helps us to do this. Hair is the foundation of the natural man”, S1 also found a relationship between the Rastafarians’ characteristics and the San Andresanos’ (people from San Andres, Colombia) way of living. He pointed out that “*en San Andres es la misma vaina*”. The academic meaning

influenced his way of observing and analysing real life in the right context. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 2, turn 78).

The class about general details found in the interview “Dreadlocks – Symbol of a natural man” was also useful to see some stereotypes or preconceptions the students had. The classroom teacher wanted them to continue mentioning topics and details such as the place where Rastafarians lived. Immediately S1 said: “On the other hand, they smoke marihuana”. For any reason this student was associating the Rastafarians’ physical appearance with smoking drugs. Although this answer could be taken as a wrong answer because it is not connected to places, the teacher researcher preferred to show it as an example of experiential knowledge due to the kind of the student’s assumption about Rastafarians. In this case, the student seemed to be taking a critical position about singers and the use of drugs (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 2, turn 114).

Table 3.19.

Categories and Indicators for Objective 3

| OBJECTIVE 3: Establish the relationship between the students’ levels of learning and their awareness of the cultural load of materials. | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Category | Indicator |
| Awareness of materials (Aw) | Definition of culture (Dc) |

To accomplish the third objective two variables were taken into account: at first, the levels of learning were measured against the number of answers or turns produced by the

learners in each of the classes observed and the kind of learning achieved. Second, the Awareness of the cultural load of materials (Aw), as predetermined category, was measured against its indicator of Definition of culture (Dc) that was revealed through the tools applied.

Table 3.20.

Students' turns in fluency vs. accuracy focused classes

| No. of Class Observation | No. of Ss' turns | | No. of T's turns | | Total | Focus |
|------------------------------------|------------------|----|------------------|----|-------|----------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | | |
| 1 | 38 | 49 | 40 | 51 | 78 | Accuracy |
| 2 | 120 | 55 | 100 | 45 | 220 | Fluency |
| 3 | 47 | 60 | 32 | 40 | 79 | Accuracy |
| 4 | 19 | 46 | 22 | 54 | 41 | Accuracy |
| 5 | 26 | 43 | 35 | 57 | 61 | Accuracy |
| TOTAL | 250 | | 229 | | 479 | Accuracy |

Table 3.20 shows that the students had much more opportunities to produce language in Class No. 2, which was focused on fluency. It was also observed that during this class the students achieved the highest levels of learning because they also had the ideal situation to use more English in a spontaneous way. In consequence it could be shared that the second class

avored the students' communicative competence because it joined a series of factors that promoted learning and the production of more English to communicate ideas. This was what happened when the teacher used a reading and a post-reading oral activity to involve the learners in opinions about the Rastafarians. The students increased their level of interest when discussing about this topic and could convey meaning through their own experiences.

Ur (1991) has stated that

In teaching the so-called 'four skills'-listening, reading, speaking and writing- the emphasis will usually be firmly on fluency. What we are interested in here is the development of learners' facility in receiving and conveying messages, with a corresponding lowering of emphasis on accuracy. (p. 103)

This author has also shared that the accuracy or fluency orientation of lessons should be explicitly announced to students to avoid confusion or frustration (Ur, 1991).

Table 3.21.

Levels of learning measured against the focus of the lesson

| Class | Level | Level of Learning | Focus |
|-------|-------|------------------------|----------|
| C2 | 4 | Experiential Knowledge | Fluency |
| C3 | 3 | Academic Comprehension | Accuracy |
| C1 | 2 | Mechanical Recitation | Accuracy |
| C4 | 2 | Mechanical Recitation | Accuracy |
| C5 | 1 | Wrong Answers | Accuracy |

Table 3.21 shows the levels of learning achieved in fluency or accuracy focused lessons. The levels of learning were quantified from 1 to 4 being 4 the highest level of learning. It was also found a relationship between the level of learning and the focus of the lesson, depending on if it was fluency or accuracy oriented. Students achieved the highest level of learning in Class No. 2 that was fluency oriented. This class offered the learners more opportunities to participate and express their opinions or ideas about Rastafarian people spontaneously.

In class No. 1, 3, 4 and 5 that were accuracy oriented, the amounts of turns taken by students decreased, as well as their level of learning, in particular in classes C1, C4 and C5.

To continue with the second variable in objective 3, “the Awareness of the cultural load of materials”, as predetermined category, it was necessary to study its components as follows:

Predetermined category: Awareness (Aw) of the cultural load of materials.

According to the Cambridge online dictionary, **awareness** is “the knowledge that something exists, or understanding of a situation or subject at the present time based on information or experience”. As an example, this dictionary includes: “Public awareness of the problem will make politicians take it seriously”.

For the *Real Academia Española*, in *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (2001), one of the main dictionaries for Spanish speakers, awareness has, among other meanings, the internal knowledge of what is good or bad; the reflexive knowledge of things, a mental activity which only the individual himself or herself can access to.

The search of the relationship between the levels of learning and the awareness of the cultural load of materials, addressed to the analysis of data obtained through the different tools: the questionnaire, the interviews to five students and the interview to the classroom teacher, applying triangulation.

First, it was necessary to make reference to tables No. 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11, and quantify the number of students' answers about the most remembered, liked and meaningful topics. These results are shown as follows:

Table 3.22.

Topics remembered

| Remembered | No. Answers | % |
|------------|-------------|-----|
| Grammar | 37 | 88 |
| Culture | 5 | 12 |
| N/A | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 42 | 100 |

In Table 3.22, the most remembered topics by students, 37 of 42 answers, were all related to grammar, perhaps due to the focus of most of the classes on accuracy. These topics were: comparative, past tense, present continuous, direct/indirect questions, present perfect, been, superlative, future tense, passive verbs, how to ask and answer.

Table 3.23.

Topics Students liked

| Like | Nº Answers | % |
|---------|------------|-----|
| Grammar | 22 | 92 |
| Culture | 2 | 8 |
| N/A | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 24 | 100 |

In Table 3.23, students answered again that they liked topics connected to grammar. In 22 of the 24 answers they said that these topics were: comparative, indirect questions, present continuous, present perfect, been superlative, how to make questions, past tense and passive verbs.

Table 3.24.

Meaningful topics

| Meaningful | No. Answers | % |
|---------------|----------------|-----|
| Grammar | 12 | 83 |
| All + Culture | 3 | 9 |
| N/A | 3 | 8 |
| TOTAL | 18 | 100 |

In Table 3.24 students were asked about the meaningful topics for learning and they repeated what they had said in the two previous questions. Grammar was considered by them as the most meaningful topic to learn English as a foreign language. The topics mentioned in this

point were: present perfect, past tense, present continuous, past continuous, how to make questions and answers, comparative, past perfect, been, with 12 of the 18 answers.

The next figure summarizes the importance given by students to the topics in the questionnaire.

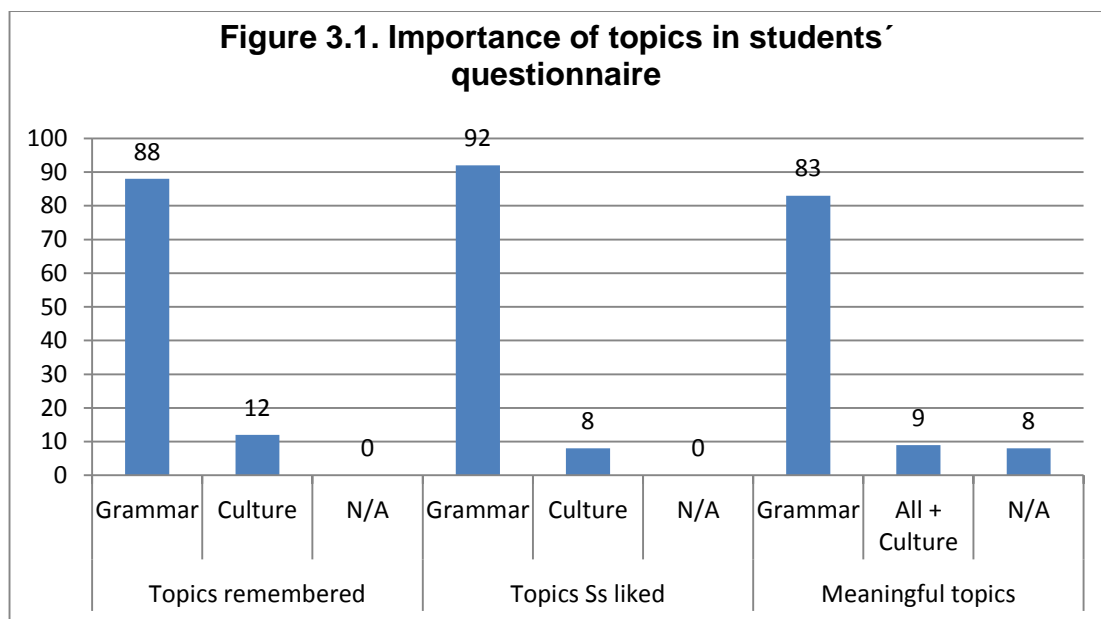


Figure 3.1, “Importance of topics in students’ questionnaire” shows in percentages the results of the students’ answers in the questionnaire about the most remembered, liked and meaningful topics in class. Based on these results, apparently, they were not aware of the cultural load of materials used in five classes.

It is important to note that 4 of the 5 classes observed were focused on accuracy, perhaps to help students with forms, as it was planned in the syllabus. Besides, as seen in Table 3.21,

two of those four classes showed that the students' level of learning was 'mechanical recitation' which connected that level of learning much more with grammar than with culture as it happened in the accuracy oriented classes. This interpretation is also supported in the classroom teacher' interview when she argued that for her and her colleagues concepts were presented in a very fast way for EFL students and that they needed more time to mechanize them. She did not feel sure about how clear students were.

Nonetheless, in spite of having achieved the experiential level of learning after long discussions about Rastafarian culture in class 2 -that was fluency oriented- students were not aware of the cultural load of materials as it was revealed in the data collected through the questionnaire and the low importance given to culture by students in Figure 3.1.

As it has been pointed out (Hinkel, 1999) materials or textbook could be: "a teacher, a resource, an ideology, a map, a trainer, an authority, a de-skinner" (p. 199). In the following part, it will be showed the result of unstructured interviews applied to the classroom teacher (T1) and the students.

In part 3.4.2.3 she talked about the students' participation and their production of learning. She answered that depending on how interesting the students found the topic, they participated and produced more oral English. According to her, if they were not interested, they did not speak. For this reason, if she saw that the topic did not favor communication, she passed quickly to a new topic. This answer also confirmed what was observed by the researcher in Class 2: students were able to communicate more when the topic of the class was Rastafarianism. See Table 3.20.

The apparent contradiction about the students' interest in topics and the different results showed by the questionnaire and the unstructured interviews applied to five students could have a reasonable explanation, and it was found in the point of view of the learners. The analysis of discourse in unstructured interviews clarified that students differentiate between **like** and **interest**. In the unstructured interviews they say that they **liked** grammatical topics, probably because it was easier for them to work on mechanical repetitions of isolated structures than to use English to communicate and convey meaning. At the same time, 56% of them also said that the most **interesting** topics were those related to culture.

As expressed before, it was found a positive relationship between the level of learning and the cultural load of materials in a communicative approach of teaching and learning English as a foreign language. In table 3.25., culture was the most interesting topic for students in the unstructured interview.

Table 3.25.

The most interesting topics in unstructured interviews

| Interesting topics | No. Answers | % |
|--------------------|----------------|-----|
| Culture | 5 | 56 |
| Past participle | 1 | 11 |
| Comparatives | 1 | 11 |
| Present continuous | 1 | 11 |
| Passive voice | 1 | 11 |
| TOTAL | 9 | 100 |

In unstructured interviews students were also able to define culture with a variety of terms that show their awareness of the concept as it is observed in Table 3.26.

Table 3.26.

Definitions of culture emerged in unstructured interviews

| Definition | No. Answers | % |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----|
| Way of living | 3 | 34 |
| Beliefs | 2 | 23 |
| Traditions | 2 | 23 |
| Way of dressing | 1 | 10 |
| Physical/mental features | 1 | 10 |
| TOTAL | 9 | 100 |

The five students interviewed recognized different components of culture and defined it as the way of living making positive comments about Rastafarian people; in some cases, they also stereotyped but in all cases showing a high interest of knowing about different beliefs, traditions, ways of dressing and physical/mental features as the skin color.

The students' answers during the unstructured interviews unveiled the reasons they had to think that culture was the most interesting topic they had studied in the five classes observed giving a great importance to it for their lives and experiences.

Table 3.27.

Importance of cultured materials in unstructured interviews

| Student No. | Reasons |
|-------------|--|
| S1 | To study different cultures, the way people live and compare them with us. |
| S5 | To know about different cultures and learn about different countries. |
| S16 | To learn about other people, like Rastafarian. |
| S17 | To learn the way they take care of their hair and that they do not eat meat. |
| S8 | To know why Rastafarian were different from us. |

The answers given by students during the unstructured interviews involved knowledge, learning and comparisons with their own experiences, terms all found in the definition of awareness. It could be argued that culture, at least in the second class observed, was that Zone of Proximal Development that made students achieve that upward momentum of the experiential level of learning and the spark that made them learn, produce and use more English (Vygotsky, Interaction between learning and development., 1978).

In fact, culture played the role of that Zone of Proximal Development defined by Vygotsky (1978) as: “the distance between the actual development level, as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 33).

Williams and Burden (1997), citing Vygotsky, have argued about the miracle of culture in language learning (Williams & Burden, 1997): “emphasized the importance of language in interacting with people; not just speech, but signs and symbols as well. It is by means of language that culture was transmitted, thinking develops and learning occurs” (p. 40).

The role of teachers, learners and peers is crucial as mediators in learning English as a foreign language, what confirms Vygotsky’s sociocultural approach of learning. “Working together with another person, either an adult or a more competent peer at a level that is just above a learner’s present capabilities is the best way for the learner to move into the next layer” (p. 40).

One more interesting aspect of the holistic Vygotsky’s approach was that “any unit of study should be presented in all its complexity, rather than skills and knowledge being presented in isolation” (p. 40). This is what was observed in the class about the Rasta culture, in which Rastafarianism was presented as a whole to foster students’ levels of learning. It could be more difficult to teach and learn a topic in a content based lesson than isolated words because it involves whole discourse and more complex language constructs. In Ur (1991) it is found that “the learner is immediately engaging with language that expresses meanings in context, and these may be seen as more interesting and clearly relevant for communicative purposes” (p. 90).

Richards (2005) supports the same approach when states that effective instructional materials in language teaching take into account the learners’ interests and motivations. At the same time, he also claims that second language is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication, among other underlying principles of contemporary

versions of communicative language teaching (Richards, Materials Development and Research - Making the Connection, 2005).

One of the motivational strategies used for successful learning is uncovered when materials provide opportunities for students to speak about themselves (Richards, 2005), as it was achieved through the use of Rastafarianism and cultured topics by the classroom teacher of this study. This kind of personalization made students use the target language to speak about themselves (Richards, Materials Development and Research - Making the Connection, 2005).

It was observed that the interactive use of language increased when the students felt involved in the discussions around what they have understood about the Rastafarians and other cultures included in their **textbook**. In fact, even the most timid students, like S5, were moved to communicate their personal points of view and felt comfortable expressing contrary ideas. This student, that had apparently been in the receptive period, during the first classes, had four turns in Spanish: “*dilo en Español*”, “*pa’ que entiendan*”, “*no*”, “*ya lo dijeron todo*”, showing that although he was as a foreign speaker that was still evading the use of English, had overcome this period. He also showed that he had understood the topic, when the classroom teacher and S1 were discussing if Rastafarians drank alcohol and coffee. He wanted to help solving the problem, when he said: “I agree, teacher. Don’ t worry”. This was not only his spontaneous interaction, but a sign of academic comprehension. (APPENDIX D, Classroom Observation No. 2, turns 76, 78 and 86).

Then, it was interesting to note that when the classroom teacher made a last question, addressing him: “What is your opinion about this culture? ... Your impressions.”, S5 first

answer was “no”, because he did not want to speak. Immediately, S1 motivated him to speak: “*pero habla, oye*”, and S5 overcame his shyness and fear, his face turned red, and could say it in English: “They are crazy”. His level of proficiency was appropriate for the context and his answer also showed experiential knowledge. He could, finally, express his opinion in English and took a position, against Rastafarians. At the end of this second class, this student raised his hand to participate in the game and answered in perfect English: “The name of the French President was Jacques Chirac”. Although this was a grammar exercise and, therefore, a mechanical recitation, this student could, through a cultured topic, win his own fight against his ability to communicate in English language. (Classroom Observation No. 2, 128, 130 and 201).

S5 said, during the unstructured interview, that he did not like to speak in English, because he felt ashamed. In fact, he did not participate in the first class observed, but in the second one. He would prefer to express his ideas in written English. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, turn 24). However, when he was asked about his favourite topics, he answered that “culture” because through cultured topics he could learn more about different countries and their cultures. He also said that although he did not participated much in class, he understood most part of the topic. The different customs were very interesting for him, for instance, things that made the difference in cultures, such as Hindu culture. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, turns 8-14).

In spite of not being aware of the cultural load of materials, cultured topics were much more important for the development of the students’ levels of learning because it was culture that made students move to the experiential level. These students were able to create and

construct ideas when they showed interest in sharing beliefs and the ideology involved in those discussions connected to culture. The situation was that the students were not aware of what they had in their hands, as it has been seen in the analysis of the third specific objective of this master's thesis.

According to the first part of the Cambridge dictionary definition, the knowledge about that culture was involved in the materials used in classes was not so relevant in the students' answers to the questionnaire applied, as it has been explained deeply before. However, the Unstructured Interview instrument applied to five Students showed much more interesting results:

S1, for instance, said that he liked to study the past participle, the cultures, comparison of different cultures on the earth planet. And he was clear to make reference, for example, about the last part that they worked on the Jamaica people way of living. He realized that Jamaicans live in a very different world and that most of them are vegetarians. Nevertheless, he pointed out that he would not like to be a vegetarian because he thought they were crazy. He thinks meat is necessary for a good health. This was a spontaneous answer to likes in English class.

(APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, turns 29 – 34).

S5 also answered that culture was the topic that he liked the best because “one knows more about the different cultures and learn about other countries”. He admitted that he did not participated much, but that he had studied the topic and that he understood most part of what he read. He found very interesting, for instance, to work on the different customs: things that made different cultures, India, for example.

S17 said that she had liked when the teacher gave them a guide to make things or the games. She also liked all the topics, except the passive voice. As it can be seen, this student was not clear at the beginning of the interview about a particular topic of her preference. Then, with the help of the researcher, she answered that they had studied one more topic: the different cultures had their own way of living. And she mentioned that she thought they had studied Hindu and Japanese cultures. After the researcher suggestion, she opened her textbook to see one more thing of her preference and she found that she had forgotten to mention the Rastaman, although she did not like them much. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, turns 7-16).

S16 answered that he liked the comparatives, the grammar part. And, then, he said that he also liked the Rastafarians, that is, their hair style and that they did not eat meat. "It is like a kind of culture". (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, turns 9-12).

S8 made a difference between theme and topic. For him, he liked the grammar themes: present continuous, passive voice; and the most interesting topics were the difference among people, in cultures. He cited as example the Rastafarians, the difference between them and Colombian people, why do they like to live in that way, in general, others culture compared to ours. He thought that Rastafarians were cool and that their way of thinking was interesting as well as that they felt identified with a person to follow him, like Bob Marley who was his idol.

The students' **definition of culture** was taken as **indicator** to know about the knowledge they have about this topic. S1 defined culture as the physical or mental features that a group of people have in common. In Colombia, he said, most of the people are brown

skinned, not so tall and thin. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, S1, turns 47-48).

S5 defined culture as the different traditions, what characterizes the different countries. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, S5, turns 15-16).

S17 said that culture is a way of living, beliefs. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, S17, turns 21-22).

S16 considered as culture the group of people that have the same beliefs, for instance, in gods, or in the way they dress or live. (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, S16, turn 13-14).

S8 said that culture is a way of living in a society, a way that identifies a group of people. It is to know how to socialize and to have certain traditions (APPENDIX C, Unstructured Interview with five students, S8, turn 8).

The previous repetitive answers showed that the students know what culture was and where it was present. However, they did not know how culture and learning of a foreign language were connected, so they were not aware of the importance of the cultural load of materials to learn more English.

Chapter 4: Implications for Practice and Research

Limitations of the study

This study, as any other ethnographical research has, as main limitation, the subjective analysis of the teacher researcher. The researcher tried to apply her knowledge and theories to the analysis of the classes observed and in spite of having measured several of the aspects connected to the role of culture in language teaching and learning, that were presented in the tables, her findings and analysis could not be used to produce general conclusions about the complexity of the teaching and learning process of a foreign language, like English.

The sample of this study was limited to only 17 undergraduate students of a low intermediate course of English as a foreign language, at Universidad del Norte, in Barranquilla, Colombia. In depth case studies were conducted with five students. Therefore, the results could not be generalized.

The ethnographic research was limited to a certain amount of classes, which may also limit the results of this study.

Conclusions

Participants in a multicultural classroom struggle with the foreign language and culture (Kramsch, *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, 1993). In this study the struggle was with different Colombian cultures as well as the target culture. It was confirmed that cultural differences affect classroom interaction and that culture should be consciously planned in: the syllabus, the methodology, the atmosphere of the class, the kind of input provided during the lessons, the creation of practice opportunities and the learners' state of receptivity (Ellis, 1994). In the relationship between plans and outcomes (from Allwright & Bailey 1991, cited by Ellis, 1994: 25) this state was defined as "an active openness, a willingness to encounter the language and the culture" (Ellis, 1994)

The fact of having cultural differences could be used by teachers and students to learn more about each other and to take advantage of the intercultural relationship they could find in the classroom, as well as to get involved in a more intercultural and globalized world.

Culture should be explicitly taught and learned. Language teachers should select and design materials being aware of their cultural load. It was proved, through this study, that the cultural load of materials could increase the students' levels of learning. In spite of that this analysis was based on a low intermediate English course, it was seen that cultured topics moved students from a level of mechanical recitation to a level of experiential knowledge. If this was demonstrated through these five case studies, teachers and institutions should improve the way they are using or involving culture in courses of English as a foreign language.

Although there was found a clear relationship between the levels of learning of English as a foreign language and the cultural load of materials, and that most of the students knew about what culture was, there was not found any relationship between the students' levels of learning and their awareness of the cultural load of materials.

Students were not aware of the important relationship between culture and learning more English, and therefore were not aware of the importance of English language to learn more about cultures. If students were aware of the importance of cultured topics in the development of their language skills, they would probably take seriously the study of English as a foreign language in undergraduate courses. There was found that if the students had any test or difficult homework on other core subjects, they would be absent in their English classes.

The indissoluble relationship between language and culture should facilitate in a better way, the cultural competence among learners of English Language. With more courses involving culture in their syllabus, undergraduate students would master the fifth skill: CULTURE.

Implications for practice

As it has been mentioned, the socio-cultural aspect of the classroom observed was complex if we considered the different components involved: cultured materials used in the English lesson, the classroom as setting, the several cultural regions of the students, the

teachers' culture and the target culture studied, the Rastafarian one. Inevitably, culture could mean conflict, too.

Probably, one of the most important implications for practice, found after finishing this interesting study, was that cultured topics should be carefully planned in college syllabus because they are an excellent way to make students increase their levels of learning.

The researcher also shares Hinkel's point of view about that if "one would expect that EFL or ESL textbooks to reflect a range of cultural contexts and to include intercultural elements", the role of **the classroom teacher**, an element of the textbooks, is of a great importance in the process of language teaching and learning through culture (Hinkel, 1999), p. 198.

It should not be denied the influence of the classroom teacher's ideology on the students' learning process. During the first class observed, when she was showing her students a Bob Marley's picture, she told them that "singers in general have tattoos and some other particular characteristics: earrings, piercing, long hair, gay, make up, dye, drugs, stink, n ick names, money". And she wrote this list of negative labels stereotyping singers, on the board. (Classroom Observation No. 1, turn 47).

The immediate reaction of the students, when she asked about singers, was as follows: S10: "Long hair ... hair style"; S11: *Un muchacho ... drugs*; S10: *Profesora, cómo se dice que huelen a feo?* How do you say? T: They smell bad or they stink. S10: In general". (Classroom Observation No. 1, turns 47 – 53).

As mentioned before, this influence could make S1 associated singers with marihuana. Although he gave a wrong answer to the teachers question about the place where Rastafarians lived, it was evident that he was still thinking of drugs, and found the connection between singers and drugs, to generalize saying that “On the other hand, they smoke marihuana” (Classroom Observation No. 2, turn 115). It could be more relevant to consider his answer as an example of experiential knowledge, than as a wrong answer or first learning level. The classroom teacher continued the class and did not pay attention to wrong answers or to that stereotyping concept.

It would be interesting to make teachers be aware of the importance of using English to learn about different cultures and to develop the language learning through the learning of different cultures. This is what Hinkel calls the culture of learning (Hinkel, 1999).

In a globalized world, it is not possible to think that English is the foreign language to learn about the target culture: that of the English speaking countries. English could be considered as one of the main means of communications among people of different cultures and languages. So what people, in this globalized world have in common, could be English, among other tools to survive.

Implications for further research

The results of this study could be useful to researchers working on different projects about the role of culture in the teaching and learning process of any other foreign language. It

was very interesting to note that two Ph.D foreign linguists, working at colleges abroad, and that were consulted by the researcher of this study, during her very long process of developing this Master's thesis, have found easier to work and research on the use of English to learn about cultures. However, they did not have, up to that moment, any clear result that showed the role of culture in learning a foreign language, as this study does.

For the researcher, it would be very interesting to work on doctoral studies to research about culture and the Zone of Proximal Development. When progress in this study seemed to be stuck, it was Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory the light at the end of the path to finish and conclude about the importance and indissoluble relationship between culture and learning.

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Appendix A

The students' questionnaire

UNIVERSIDAD DEL NORTE - INGLES 4

NOMBRE: _____

Con el propósito de completar una investigación para la Maestría en Enseñanza del Inglés, le solicitamos el favor de contestar sinceramente la siguiente información. Su colaboración será muy valiosa y absolutamente confidencial, sin implicaciones para sus notas.

DATOS PERSONALES

1. Edad: _____
2. Programa: _____
3. Semestre: _____
4. Lugar de nacimiento: _____
5. ¿Ha vivido siempre en Barranquilla? SI _____ NO _____
6. Si su respuesta a la pregunta 5 fue NO, en qué otros lugares ha vivido?
 - a. Mencione los nombres: _____
 - b. ¿Cuándo? _____ Cuánto tiempo? _____

ENCIERRE EN UN CÍRCULO SU RESPUESTA.

Sobre su clase de Inglés usted:

7. Prefiere actividades:
 - a. Individuales
 - b. En pareja
 - c. En grupos más grandes
8. Cuando le asignan actividades en grupo:
 - a. Prefiere reunirse con los estudiantes de su misma carrera
 - b. Prefiere reunirse con los estudiantes de otras carreras
 - c. Le es indiferente con quién tiene que reunirse
9. Sobre los temas estudiados hasta el momento, cuál (es) recuerda más?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
10. Sobre los temas que más recuerda, cuál(es) le han gustado más?
 - a. _____ Por qué?
 - b. _____ Por qué?
 - c. _____ Por qué?

11. ¿Con cuál tema siente que aprendió más Inglés?

12. ¿Quiera anotar algún comentario adicional?

MUCHAS GRACIAS

Appendix B

Unstructured Interview with the classroom teacher (No.1)

| Turn | Subj. | Discourse |
|------|-------|---|
| 1 | R | Qué comentarios tiene sobre el material utilizado? |
| 2 | T | El material no nos gusta. Es muy light. Tenemos que reforzarlo, complementarlo con otro porque es muy simple. Ese es el consenso. La idea es cambiarlo. Presentan los conceptos pero muy rápido. No hay oportunidad de mecanizar y no es seguro que a los estudiantes les quede claro. Entonces, hay que buscar otras cosas. La manera como se introduce... |
| 3 | R | Podría mostrarme ejemplos? |
| 4 | T | La unidad 2, sobre preguntas indirectas. En la página 7 hay unos símbolos. No alcanzaron a mecanizar. Tuve que traerles otros símbolos. Luego que deducen, entonces se llevan a contestar. No es suficiente. |
| 5 | R | Siempre comparan las costumbres de otros lugares con las nuestras? |
| 6 | T | Depende del interés que encuentren en el tema, participan y producen más. Si no, no hablan. Si el tema no es favorable para la comunicación, se pasa por encima. |
| 7 | R | Cuáles son los estudiantes que menos hablan o participan en clase? |
| 8 | T | Son estudiantes de psicología. Todo lo hacen juntas, no se mezclan con nadie. Quizá influye el hecho de que parecen consentidas o pechichonas |
| 9 | R | Los estudiantes siempre colocan sus sillas en la misma forma? |
| 10 | T | Sí, hacen una herradura, todos contra la pared y generalmente ocupan los mismos puestos. |

Unstructured interview with the classroom teacher (No. 2)

| Turn | Subj. | Discourse |
|------|-------|--|
| 1 | R | Did the students had a positive attitude towards the topics included in Unit 2? |
| 2 | T | They had different attitudes, depending on the topic. For instance: They did not like Art because they don't have too much background about it. They do not have too much to comment. When we had to make comparisons between men and women, it was so, so. We did not talk about the snow because that has nothing to do with us. Although this kind of topic could be selected depending on the group, if the teacher feels he/she can teach them something new, because it is a part of the foreign culture. In this sense, I use this topic when I feel a positive or a least a neutral environment. |
| 3 | R | Do the students like coming to English classes? |
| 4 | T | That depends on the moment. If they have to study some other subject tests they will probably be absent. |
| 5 | R | Did they enjoy another topic? |
| 6 | T | The accidents, because of the anecdotes. |
| 7 | R | And what about the hobbies? |
| 8 | T | Yes, because of the anecdotes, too. They talked about their own experiences. |
| 9 | R | And this one, the giant trees? |
| 10 | T | Not too much. |
| 11 | R | How do you plan the activities you select for the class? |
| 12 | T | I try to connect them with the topic we are working on. For example, for this topic, I had the Bob Marley's son. |
| 13 | R | Could you, please tell me about the students' ages? |
| 14 | T | They are between 17 and 20. |

| Turn | Subj. | Discourse |
|------|-------|---|
| 15 | R | Where are they from? |
| 16 | T | From different places of Colombia. |
| 17 | R | How is the role of the teacher towards culture-based topics? |
| 18 | T | I normally speak about what I saw in England, my own experience there. I was working there as a teacher assistant for about ten months, at high-school, grades 12 and 13. That was between 1999 and 2000. When I do not have the answer, I try to look for it everywhere. The most important thing is to make an attempt to explain the foreign culture people belief and common behaviours. I talk about native people. Besides, I recommend my students to talk to the native teachers working at our Language Institute, so that they can see their intonation and the use of expressions as “really”. |
| 19 | R | Do they put the chairs in the same way every day? |
| 20 | T | Yes, they prefer to be sat next to their career classmates or next to their friends. |
| 21 | R | I saw when Carlos and Sergio were fighting. |
| 22 | T | Yes, because Carlos (S1) called him “gay”. |

Appendix C

Unstructured interview with S1: Electrical Engineering, IV Semester

| Turn | Subj. | Discourse | Cat | Ind. |
|------|-------|---|-----|------|
| 1 | R | ¿Dónde naciste? | | |
| 2 | S1 | En Cartagena. Allí estudié la primaria en el colegio La Salle. | | |
| 3 | R | ¿Y el bachillerato? | | |
| 4 | S1 | Lo hice aquí en Barranquilla, en el Seminario San Luis Beltrán. | | |
| 5 | R | ¿Desde hace cuánto vives aquí en la ciudad? | | |
| 6 | S1 | Desde hace 8 años. | | |
| 7 | R | ¿Qué estudias? | | |
| 8 | S1 | Ingeniería eléctrica. | | |
| 9 | R | ¿Cómo terminaste viviendo en Barranquilla? | | |
| 10 | S1 | A mi papá lo trasladaron para acá. | | |
| 11 | R | ¿Qué hace tu papá? | | |
| 12 | S1 | Es asesor jurídico de la CRA (medio ambiente). | | |
| 13 | R | ¿Y tu mamá? | | |
| 14 | S1 | Mi mamá es ama de casa. | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|--|--|--|
| 15 | R | ¿Fue difícil adaptarte a una nueva ciudad? | | |
| 16 | S1 | No, la verdad es que no tuve ningún inconveniente con el cambio de Cartagena a Barranquilla. Me adapto fácil a cualquier ambiente. | | |
| 17 | R | ¿Cómo te sientes en la Universidad del Norte? | | |
| 18 | S | Me gusta el ambiente. | | |
| 19 | R | ¿A qué te refieres? | | |
| 20 | S | Bueno, me siento a gusto con las instalaciones físicas, con la atención de las personas; profesores, secretarias y con todos los servicios en general. | | |
| 21 | R | ¿Cuál es la materia que más te gusta? | | |
| 22 | S1 | Cálculo 3. Me siento muy cómodo con las materias técnicas. | | |
| 23 | R | ¿En inglés cómo te sientes? | | |
| 24 | S1 | Bien, no me gusta el horario. Es muy temprano. Este semestre se me cruzaba. | | |
| 25 | R | He notado que eres muy activo en mi clase. | | |
| 26 | S1 | Sí, para despertarme. Considero que el Inglés es necesario. | | |
| 27 | R | ¿Qué temas de la clase de Inglés te gustaron más? | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|---|--|--|
| 28 | S1 | El participio pasado, las culturas, comparaciones de las diversas culturas del planeta. Por ejemplo, esto último que trabajamos sobre el modo de vida de los jamaquinos. | | |
| 29 | R | ¿Qué fue lo que más te llamó la atención? | | |
| 30 | S1 | Cómo viven ellos. Que viven en un mundo diferente al que nosotros vivimos aquí. En particular me llamó la atención que la mayoría son vegetarianos. No me gustaría ser vegetariano. | | |
| 31 | R | ¿Por qué? | | |
| 32 | S1 | Porque pienso que están locos porque la carne es necesaria. | | |
| 33 | R | ¿No será que los jamaquinos piensan que los locos somos nosotros? | | |
| 34 | S1 | De pronto sí, porque somos diferentes. | | |
| 35 | R | ¿Hay diferencias culturales en el salón de clases? | | |
| 36 | S1 | Yo no gusto del cachaco. Es mala gente. Con la mayoría de personas que he interactuado, se creen superiores a los costños; son egoístas. En clase he encontrado cachacos. Sí. No he tenido problemas con ellos. No. Uno evita los problemas porque viene aquí a estudiar y listo. | | |
| 37 | R | ¿Y se dan casos de conflicto en el salón de clases? | | |
| 38 | S1 | Sí, claro. Es por el mismo modo de ser de las personas, que muchas veces no son de una sola cara; son hipócritas. He | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|---|--|--|
| | | visto uno especialmente, que es cachaco. Es hipócrita, habla de todo el mundo por detrás. | | |
| 39 | R | ¿Cachaco quiere decir de Bogotá? | | |
| 40 | S1 | No, me refiero al de Bucaramanga porque es mala gente, igual que el de Pereira. | | |
| 41 | R | ¿Qué más estudiaste de las culturas? | | |
| 42 | S | Todo de Estados Unidos y Canadá. | | |
| 43 | R | ¿Y eso te gusta? | | |
| 44 | S1 | Sí, pero prefiero conocer lo nuestro porque yo sé que el país nuestro tiene cosas mucho más hermosas que los demás. Desafortunadamente no se pueden ver por el conflicto armado, que es un gran impedimento. | | |
| 45 | R | ¿Tuvieron la oportunidad de hablar de Colombia en Inglés? | | |
| 46 | S1 | Sí, claro. Escribimos en el tablero cosas que hacen parte de nuestra cultura: café, drogas, mujeres, riquezas naturales. Hicimos diálogos y un artículo relacionado con esos tópicos. Nosotros nos lanzamos. Lo hicimos. | | |
| 47 | R | Para ti, ¿qué es cultura? | | |
| 48 | S1 | Es lo que hace común a un grupo determinado de personas, aquellos rasgos... físicos y mentales que hacen común a un grupo de personas. Casi todos coincidimos en ser morenos, no muy altos, delgados. | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|--|--|--|
| 49 | R | ¿Con cuál de tus compañeros prefieres trabajar en las clases de Inglés? | | |
| 50 | S1 | Generalmente trabajo en Inglés con las personas con las que me desenvuelvo en la carrera, porque son amigos míos de antaño. | | |
| 51 | R | ¿Qué más te gustaría ver? | | |
| 52 | S1 | Que a nosotros nos colocaran una clase diferente con tópicos en inglés. Que nos sentáramos con la profesora y los alumnos. | | |
| 53 | R | ¿Me puedes ampliar eso? | | |
| 54 | S1 | Un día nos sentamos a hablar entre todos, y sacamos un tema al aire. Así nos damos cuenta de que piensan las personas; y si pensamos diferente, por qué, y como. En inglés sería bien también. Algo espontáneo; para mostrar nuestras habilidades y potencialidades en el idioma, para demostrar que estamos pensando en inglés. Porque lo importante es pensar en inglés, y hablar en inglés. Eso me lo dijo una tía mía que vive en Miami, desde hace como 20 años, habla inglés perfecto, y tiene nacionalidad americana. Viene constantemente aquí, porque dice que le hace mucha falta su país. | | |
| 55 | R | ¿Te gustaría salir de Colombia? | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|--|--|--|
| 56 | S1 | De pronto sí, para conocer. Para unir más gente de mi país. | | |
| 57 | R | ¿Y para estudios? | | |
| 58 | S1 | Sí, sería interesante; me gustaría ir a un país de habla hispana, porque este fue el idioma con el que yo nací. A España por ejemplo. | | |
| 59 | R | ¿Pero, sí te gusta el Inglés? | | |
| 60 | S1 | Sí, y cuando termine el curso creo que podré hablar bien el idioma. Me llama mucho la atención las formas tan distintas a la nuestra que tienen para expresarse. Por ejemplo: cuando está cayendo un aguacero, una persona de habla inglesa no entiende eso; ellos dicen, están lloviendo <i>cats and dogs</i> . Para ellos eso es un aguacero, y para nosotros no significa nada. | | |

Unstructured interview with S5: Electrical Engineering, IV Semester.

| Turn | Subj. | Discourse | Cat. | Ind. |
|------|-------|---|------|------|
| 1 | R | ¿Dónde estudiaste el bachillerato? | | |
| 2 | S5 | En el Colegio del Seminario. Desde 7° Grado estudié con Carlos. | | |
| 3 | R | ¿Cómo vas en Ingeniería? | | |
| 4 | S5 | Bien. | | |
| 5 | R | ¿Y En Inglés? | | |
| 6 | S5 | Mal, porque en este nivel uno tiene que estar hablando y a mí no me gusta estar hablando en Inglés porque me da pena. | | |
| 7 | R | ¿Cuál de los temas vistos en la clase de Inglés te gustaron más? | | |
| 8 | S5 | El de la cultura porque uno conoce más de las diferentes culturas y aprende de otros países. | | |
| 9 | R | ¿Participaste más con ese tema? | | |
| 10 | S5 | No. Tampoco participé mucho, pero sí investigué. Entiendo la mayor parte de lo que leo en Inglés. | | |
| 11 | R | Explícame qué te pareció interesante. | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|--|--|--|
| 12 | S5 | Las diferentes costumbres. | | |
| 13 | R | ¿Hiciste algún trabajo en clase? | | |
| 14 | S5 | Las cosas que diferenciaban las diferentes culturas. En India, por ejemplo. | | |
| 15 | R | ¿Qué entiendes por el término cultura? | | |
| 16 | S5 | Las diferentes tradiciones, lo que caracteriza a cada uno de los países. | | |
| 17 | R | ¿En tu salón de clase hay una sola cultura, o hay varias? | | |
| 18 | S5 | Depende. Como país hay una sola, pero como hogar, cada uno tiene diferente cultura. | | |
| 19 | R | ¿Tú crees que la diferencia cultural entre los miembros de un grupo puede causar algún problema? | | |
| 20 | S5 | Pues sí, porque si de pronto no comparten algunas ideas, van a tener inconveniente. | | |
| 21 | R | ¿En algún momento de las clases se notaron conflictos por esas diferencias o por criterios culturales? | | |
| 22 | S5 | No, porque no son temas conflictivos. Religión, sí. | | |
| 23 | R | ¿En Inglés, te gustaría hacer o ver algo diferente? | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|---|--|--|
| 24 | S5 | Que me hagan expresar las ideas de otra forma que no sea oral. | | |
| 25 | R | ¿O sea que en las pruebas escritas de Inglés te va bien? | | |
| 26 | S5 | Depende. Estudio más el otro quiz porque es más importante para mí. Primero está la carrera. | | |
| 27 | R | ¿Qué vas a hacer cuando termines la carrera? | | |
| 28 | S5 | Pienso estudiar Psicología, mientras trabajo. | | |
| 29 | R | ¿Piensas viajar? | | |
| 30 | S5 | Sí, a España, para no tener que aprender otro idioma. | | |
| 31 | R | ¿Qué hace tu papá? | | |
| 32 | S5 | No trabaja. Nunca lo ha hecho. Mi mamá sí trabaja. Es Jefe del Departamento de Vida en Colseguros. No tiene carrera. | | |
| 33 | R | ¿Tienes más hermanos? | | |
| 34 | S5 | Soy hijo único. Vivo con mi mamá. | | |

Unstructured Interview with S17, Psychology, IV Semester

| Turn | Subj. | Discourse | Cat. | Ind. |
|------|-------|--|------|------|
| 1 | R | ¿Qué hacen tus papás? | | |
| 2 | S17 | Mi papá es odontólogo en Sabanalarga y mi mamá es abogada. Ella tiene una empresa de reciclaje en la casa. | | |
| 3 | R | ¿Dónde naciste? | | |
| 4 | S17 | Nací en Bogotá, por traslado de mi papá. Viví feliz allá hasta los seis años. Ahora me siento de Barranquilla. | | |
| 5 | R | ¿Cómo te sientes con el Inglés? | | |
| 6 | S17 | Bien, me gusta. | | |
| 7 | R | ¿De los temas estudiados, qué fue lo que más te gustó? | | |
| 8 | S17 | De las actividades, cuando la <i>teacher</i> nos daba una guía para las cosas, para corregir; también los juegos. De los temas, todo, pero no la voz pasiva. | | |
| 9 | R | En tu grupo hay gente de otras partes? | | |
| 10 | S17 | No, mis amigos, no. Todos son de acá. | | |

| | | | | |
|----|-----|---|--|--|
| 11 | R | ¿En Inglés te relacionaste con gente de otras partes? | | |
| 12 | S17 | Ah, sí. Vimos un tema, el de las culturas, cómo cada cultura tenía diferentes formas de vida. | | |
| 13 | R | ¿Cuáles culturas viste? | | |
| 14 | S17 | Creo que la hindú y la del Japón. | | |
| 15 | R | ¿Quieres revisar en el libro, para ver qué más te gustó? | | |
| 16 | S17 | Esto también, lo de los hombres rasta, aunque no me gusta mucho. Y los comparativos. | | |
| 17 | R | ¿Cómo así? | | |
| 18 | S17 | O sea, me interesa saber de la otra gente, pero no me gusta ser como ellos. | | |
| 19 | R | ¿Y por qué los comparativos sí te gustaron? | | |
| 20 | S17 | La estructura, la forma de hacerlo. Me gusta utilizar eso. | | |
| 21 | R | Si te preguntan qué es cultura, ¿qué contestarías? | | |
| 22 | S17 | Forma de vida, creencias. | | |

| | | | | |
|----|-----|--|--|--|
| 23 | R | ¿Cuáles son las tuyas? | | |
| 24 | S17 | Supuestamente pertenezco a la barranquillera. Creo en Dios. La verdad yo no le paro bolas a eso. | | |
| 25 | R | Cómo son los barranquilleros? | | |
| 26 | S17 | Son espontáneos, egoístas en todo; piensan más que todo en ellos mismos. No tienen que ver con nada. Te tratan de tú enseguida. | | |
| 27 | R | Te gusta eso? | | |
| 28 | S17 | Sí, porque yo soy así. Soy muy sociable, le busco conversación a todo el mundo. En cambio, la gente de otras culturas tiene más reservas para eso. | | |
| 29 | R | ¿Qué otra cosa te identifica a ti o a los barranquilleros? | | |
| 30 | S17 | La alegría, las fiestas. Por ejemplo, perdió la selección colombiana de fútbol, se cayó el árbol; o sea, por cualquier cosa buscamos celebración. | | |
| 31 | R | He notado que eres muy activa en las clases, ¿a tus compañeros les gusta eso? | | |

| | | | | |
|----|-----|---|--|--|
| 32 | S17 | A unos les gusta, a otros, no, porque dicen que soy muy gritona. Pero lo que pasa es que yo pregunto, les digo que estoy pagando y puedo preguntar lo que me dé la gana. | | |
| 33 | R | ¿Qué te hubiera gustado hacer diferente en la clase de Inglés? | | |
| 34 | S17 | A mí todo me gustó. Lo que más me gusta es que sea ameno para mí lo que estoy haciendo y la <i>teacher</i> nos hizo muchos juegos. Ayer estuve diferente porque no me gustó la profesora. | | |
| 35 | R | Qué piensas hacer cuándo termines la Psicología? | | |
| 36 | S17 | Supuestamente, especializarme en algo. Me gusta mucho la Psicología Clínica. No aquí. Quiero irme a Argentina porque he oído bastantes comentarios de la Psicología allá. | | |
| 37 | R | Irías a un país de habla inglesa? | | |
| 38 | S17 | Sí, a Inglaterra. Siempre me ha gustado por las fotos que he visto. | | |

Unstructured Interview with S16. Mechanical Engineering. II Semester.

| No. | Subj. | Discourse | Cat. | Ind. |
|-----|-------|---|------|------|
| 1 | R | Cómo te sientes en la Universidad del Norte? | | |
| 2 | S16 | Bien. Y con los amigos, también. Me gusta la facilidad para conseguir las cosas. Por ejemplo, si quiero jugar, voy y alquilo las raquetas de ping pong. Lo mismo es en la biblioteca. | | |
| 3 | R | ¿Cómo te ha ido con el Inglés? | | |
| 4 | S16 | Yo estuve un tiempo en el Colombo y aprendí. He mejorado aquí. | | |
| 5 | R | ¿En qué? | | |
| 6 | S16 | En gramática. Allá sólo aprendí a expresarme. Hice cuatro niveles en dos años. | | |
| 7 | R | ¿Qué piensas del Inglés? | | |
| 8 | S16 | Que es necesario. Tiene utilidad. Lo uso para ver televisión y algunas veces consulto libros en Inglés. | | |
| 9 | R | ¿Qué temas de la clase de Inglés te gustaron más? | | |
| 10 | S16 | Los comparativos, como la gramática. | | |
| 11 | R | ¿Qué más? | | |

| | | | | |
|----|-----|---|--|--|
| 12 | S16 | Ah, los rasta. O sea, la forma como se cuidaban el cabello, que no comen carne. Eso es como una especie de cultura. | | |
| 13 | R | ¿Y qué entiendes por cultura? | | |
| 14 | S16 | Es un grupo de personas que tienen una forma de pensar, por ejemplo, en diferentes dioses, o la forma como visten o viven. | | |
| 15 | R | ¿Qué piensas de los rasta? | | |
| 16 | S16 | Cuando fuimos al laboratorio, encontré que tienen varios dioses, los faraones en Egipto, y reinas. Cultivan marihuana. | | |
| 17 | R | ¿Cómo te parece eso? | | |
| 18 | S16 | Para mí es normal. Han vivido así por tiempo, igual que nosotros. | | |
| 19 | R | O sea, que los aceptas como son? | | |
| 20 | S16 | Sí, yo no tengo problemas con eso. | | |
| 21 | R | En tu salón de clases hay una o varias culturas? | | |
| 22 | S16 | Varias porque hay grupos que siempre se juntan. Por ejemplo, las de Psicología. El otro somos todos los demás; hay dos grupos culturales. | | |
| 23 | R | Creas que el hecho de tener diferentes culturas puede traer problemas? | | |
| 24 | S16 | En algunos casos, sí. Por ejemplo, lo que estamos viendo. | | |

| | | | | |
|----|-----|---|--|--|
| 25 | R | ¿En el salón? | | |
| 26 | S16 | No, en el salón, no. | | |
| 27 | R | ¿A dónde piensas ir a especializarte? | | |
| 28 | S16 | A Alemania. Siempre he querido vivir fuera. No es que no me guste Colombia, sino que desde pequeño he querido vivir fuera para independizarme. Cuando uno es niño los papás son los que le enseñan. | | |
| 29 | R | ¿Por qué escogiste Alemania? | | |
| 30 | S16 | Porque en mi carrera hay varias empresas de automóviles y yo siempre he querido diseñar, trabajar en eso. En Colombia no hay tanto campo. | | |

Unstructured Interview with S8. Systems Engineering. II Semester.

| No. | Subj. | Discourse | Cat. | Ind. |
|-----|-------|--|------|------|
| 1 | R | ¿Dónde naciste? | | |
| 2 | S8 | En Bogotá | | |
| 3 | R | ¿Con quién vives? | | |
| 4 | S8 | Con mis papás. | | |
| 5 | R | ¿Qué hacen ellos? | | |
| 6 | S8 | Mi mamá es Gerente de Exportación de carbón en la Zona Norte y mi papá gerencia un negocio propio. | | |
| 7 | R | ¿Desde cuándo vives en Barranquilla? | | |
| 8 | S8 | Desde hace 2 años. Estaba en Santa Marta. Allá hice 8 y 9 grado, pero luego me vine acá por traslado de mi mamá y terminé el bachillerato en el Colegio Biffi. | | |
| 9 | R | ¿Te gustó Santa Marta? | | |
| 10 | S8 | Sí, porque es una ciudad tranquila. No hay tanto alboroto, aunque la pasividad no es que me agrade tanto. | | |
| 11 | R | ¿Alboroto dónde? | | |
| 12 | S8 | En las calles, como en Bogotá: mucho carro, mucha gente, con peligro. | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|---|--|--|
| 13 | R | ¿Cómo te sientes en Barranquilla? | | |
| 14 | S8 | Ni como en Bogotá, ni como en Santa Marta. Me siento calmado. | | |
| 15 | R | ¿Has hecho amigos con facilidad en Barranquilla y Santa Marta? | | |
| 16 | S8 | Sí, sobre todo en Barranquilla. Hay sitios agradables a los que uno quisiera ir siempre. Por ejemplo, el Parque Washington. Me gusta ir ahí a sentarme a hablar. Lo mismo que al Golf, Villa Country. | | |
| 17 | R | ¿Qué otra cosa te gusta de acá? | | |
| 18 | S8 | Los teatros. Voy mucho a cine. | | |
| 19 | R | ¿No has pensado en devolvete a Bogotá? | | |
| 20 | S8 | Siempre he pensado que me gusta más Bogotá, pero no me regresé por no dejar sola a mi mamá. Es que yo soy el menor de cuatro hijos y el único que está en Barranquilla. Hay dos en Bogotá y otro en Medellín. | | |
| 21 | R | ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de Bogotá? | | |
| 22 | S8 | Los amigos. Los extraño. Hay diferencias entre los amigos de allá y los de aquí? | | |
| 23 | R | ¿Hay diferencias entre los amigos de allá y los de aquí? | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|--|--|--|
| 24 | S8 | Sí, claro. La forma de expresar su alegría. Aquí son más amigables, expresivos. Allá son más reservados, más serios. | | |
| 25 | R | ¿Cómo te sientes en la Universidad del Norte? | | |
| 26 | S8 | Bien. Me he adaptado. Me han parecido un poco difícil las matemáticas en general, como el cálculo y la física. | | |
| 27 | R | ¿Y en Inglés? | | |
| 28 | S8 | Bien. | | |
| 29 | R | ¿Te gusta? | | |
| 30 | S8 | Siempre me ha gustado. Es más, mi objetivo es este: hablar Inglés. | | |
| 31 | R | ¿Cuáles fueron los temas que más te gustaron? | | |
| 32 | S8 | El presente continuo, la voz pasiva. Para mí tema significa gramática. | | |
| 33 | R | Y entonces, ¿cuáles fueron los tópicos más interesantes? | | |
| 34 | S8 | Las diferencias entre personas, en las culturas. Por ejemplo, los Rastafarians. La diferencia entre nosotros y ellos, por qué les gusta vivir así. La cultura de otro país comparada con la nuestra. | | |
| 35 | R | ¿Qué piensas de los Rastas? | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|---|--|--|
| 36 | S8 | Son chéveres. Son diferentes. | | |
| 37 | R | ¿Qué sientes hacia ellos? | | |
| 38 | S8 | Me parece interesante su forma de pensar y que se identificaran con una persona para seguirla, para ser así, como por ejemplo, siguen a Bob Marley; él es su ídolo. | | |
| 39 | R | Para ti, ¿qué es cultura? | | |
| 40 | S8 | Es como una forma de vivir en sociedad, una forma de identificarse un grupo de personas. Es saber socializar y tener ciertas tradiciones. | | |
| 41 | R | ¿En el salón de clases hay subculturas? | | |
| 42 | S8 | No lo noté. | | |
| 43 | R | ¿Crees que las diferencias culturales pueden llegar a ser motivo de roce o conflicto? | | |
| 44 | S8 | De pronto sí. Puede que las personas no se entiendan. | | |
| 45 | R | Culturalmente hablando, ¿qué te parece digno de destacar en Colombia? | | |
| 46 | S8 | De Colombia, no; de Barranquilla: los carnavales y la comida típica. | | |
| 47 | R | ¿Sobre qué otras cosas te gusta conversar en Inglés? | | |
| 48 | S8 | Un poco de historia, del mundo en general, pensamientos de la gente, gustos y disgustos. | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|--|--|--|
| 49 | R | ¿Qué planes tienes al terminar la carrera? | | |
| 50 | S8 | Crear mi propia empresa. Salir adelante. Aprender más de lo que pueda. Tener una vida estable. | | |
| 51 | R | ¿Dónde? | | |
| 52 | S8 | No sé. Me gustaría tener una empresa de creación de software. | | |
| 53 | R | ¿Y piensas salir del país cuando termines la carrera? | | |
| 54 | S8 | Sí, a especializarme en el estudio del Inglés y en cosas que me ayuden a crear el software. Primero estudiaría comercio exterior para ayudarme a mí mismo a crear, a concretar lo que voy a hacer, lo que creo y pienso. | | |
| 55 | R | ¿Ya has pensado en algún país? | | |
| 56 | S8 | Al principio sería en un país de habla inglesa: Inglaterra. | | |
| 57 | R | ¿Alguna razón especial? | | |
| 58 | S8 | Su industria es buena. Como segunda opción tengo los Estados Unidos. | | |
| | | (The student finished this conversation with the title of a song: “With arms wild open”). He mentioned his own interpretation): | | |

| | | | | |
|----|----|---|--|--|
| 59 | S8 | “Totalmente abierto al mundo. Todo el mundo debe ser abierto al mundo y convivir con él. Aprender a recibir. Convivencia armónica sin problemas”. | | |
|----|----|---|--|--|

Appendix D

Classroom Observation No.1

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|--|
| | | The classroom teacher greeted the students and asked them about what they were doing during the weekend. |
| 1 | T | Carlos, what did you do? |
| 2 | S1 | A project. |
| 3 | T | And you, Carmen? |
| 4 | S2 | A partial. Studying a partial |
| 5 | T | You, Lisette? |
| 6 | S3 | Relaxed weekend |
| 7 | T | Do we have homework? |
| | | The students did not answer. |
| 8 | T | Any volunteer? No volunteer? Karime? |
| 9 | S4 | Pero es que no sé cómo decirlo en Inglés. Culture hindu, the people have temple... cómo se dice? |
| 10 | T | Temple, similar to Spanish. |
| 11 | S4 | Los... the more or less rat. The people have temple for a rat because they think... How do you: personas santas, sagradas... Es que es muy enredado. |
| 12 | T | Who else? You? |
| | | (The selected student denied with his head). |

| | | |
|----|----|---|
| 13 | S1 | Pamplona is similar. Thousand people come to Pamplona. |
| 14 | T | Questions? |
| 15 | S1 | Do you have the quizzes? |
| 16 | T | Yes, but I'll give them at the end of the class. Lisette? |
| | | No answer |
| 17 | T | Have you ever been to the USA? |
| 18 | S3 | Have you ever been to the USA? |
| 19 | T | Ok. Sandra? |
| 20 | S6 | Hice como está en el libro. |
| 21 | T | I did the same way. Some people in Latin America have "agüeros". It was a confusion: it is not "abuelos" but "agüeros". Perhaps you have to look at the dictionary. |
| | | (The teacher moved the chairs and organized the students in a semicircle). |
| 22 | S6 | Do you know why this people... twelve wishes? |
| 23 | S7 | Because they are hungry or to get good luck. |
| 24 | S1 | Yo la respondo. |
| 25 | T | No, no, another student. |
| 26 | S8 | The first one |
| 27 | S6 | To get the twelve wishes. |
| 28 | T | In our country we have twelve grapes at 12 o'clock. Why? The same tradition. I'm asking if you had... |
| 29 | S1 | I forget to eat. |
| 30 | S4 | Yes. |
| 31 | T | I repeat. You had the grapes because next year you want your wishes come true or you forgot. |
| 32 | S4 | Algunos, no. |
| 33 | T | Some not. |
| 34 | S4 | No, pero los sigo haciendo. |

| | | |
|----|-----|---|
| 35 | T | Like in Spanish: I continue, or I go on doing this. The last person for today. I guess nobody else. Open your books on page 10: "Read and take notes". Answer. a: Dreadlocks. |
| 36 | S1 | It's a style of life. |
| 37 | S9 | Related to hair. |
| 38 | T | Look at picture number 4. Who is it? |
| | | (The students answered in chorus) |
| 39 | Ss | Bob Marley. |
| 40 | T | It seems to be Bob Marley. How can you describe it? |
| 41 | Ss | He is a singer. |
| 42 | T | He died. When? |
| 43 | S6 | Ochenta y algo. |
| 44 | T | Eighty something. |
| 45 | T | Do you like this music? |
| | | (No answer) |
| 46 | T | Singers in general have tattoos and some other particular characteristics: earrings, piercing, long hair, gay, make up, dye, drugs, stink, nick names, money. |
| | | (She wrote the list on the board). |
| 47 | S10 | Long hair... hair style. |
| 48 | T | Ingrid: What do you say? We are talking about the singers. |
| 49 | S11 | Un muchacho... drugs. |
| 50 | S10 | Profesora, cómo se dice que huelen a feo? How do you say? |
| 51 | T | They smell bad or they stinck. |
| 52 | S10 | In general. |
| 53 | T | Roxana, any comments? |

| | | |
|----|----|---|
| | | (No comment) |
| 54 | T | Marina, what do you say? Sh... money. Hair style. |
| | | (She points to the board). |
| 55 | T | Look at the title. Dreadlocks are the hair style. |
| | | (She gave the instructions to do the exercise). |
| 56 | T | Work in pairs. |
| | | Students participated actively in the exercise, especially the three students, boys, that had been answering most of the time). |
| | | |
| 57 | T | Did you finish? |
| | | (In chorus) |
| 58 | Ss | Yes. |
| 59 | T | Any unknown vocabulary? |
| | | (She explained some uses in English). |

| | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 60 | T | Another one? |
| 61 | Ss | Roots |
| 62 | T | Lisette? |
| 63 | S3 | The fourth paragraph |
| 64 | T | Roots is a synonym of origin. |
| 65 | T | Unpleasant: prefix; slip-slippery. |
| 66 | S3 | Stuff |
| 67 | T | Ah, it is very common. Stuff means... Carmen? |
| 68 | S2 | Dreadlocks, hair style |
| 69 | T | Impressions? |
| 70 | S3 | What is the meaning of... |
| | | (The student read and the teacher drew a bread to show the slices). |
| 71 | T | Impressions. You are very quiet today. Would anybody in this class adopt this style? |
| 72 | S2 | Teacher.. |
| 73 | S10 | No me gusta el estilo. |
| 74 | S3 | Sí se lo lava, pero no se lo peina. |
| 75 | T | He never combs his hair. |
| 76 | S6 | Digo que yo no sé |
| 77 | Ss | He is a good person. |
| 78 | T | Do you know if it could be possible to invite him to class tomorrow? |
| | | (The students stood up and started leaving the room without listening to the teacher's instructions. She made them come back and pay attention to the homework. Some of the students asked for the quizzes). |

Classroom Observation No. 2

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 1 | T | Are you fine? No problems? |
| 2 | S12 | Trasnochada. |
| 3 | T | Ah! |
| 4 | S12 | Trasnochada? |
| 5 | T | Why? Well, it is an expression, overslept. I mean you slept the whole night but you slept nothing. |
| 6 | S12 | Nothing |
| 7 | T | Are you sure? Nothing at all? |
| 8 | S12 | Eh, eh sí, una hora. |
| 9 | T | Ah, that's something. You know, the difference when you say nothing is like this. Obviously it is much better to sleep for about six hours... but if you slept great, it's something. Lorena, what about you? |
| 10 | S10 | So, so. |
| 11 | T | Why? |
| 12 | S10 | I have... ¿Cómo se dice "los ojos cansados"? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 13 | T | My eyes are tired or they hurt. |
| 14 | S10 | They hurt. |
| 15 | T | My eyes hurt. |
| 16 | S10 | My eyes hurt. |
| 17 | T | Because I ... |
| 18 | S10 | Because I really... I can't. I have exams. |
| 19 | T | Ah? |
| 20 | S10 | Lo que pasa es que me estuvieron haciendo unos exámenes de la cabeza porque me da mucho dolor de cabeza. |
| 21 | T | Ah, you had some tests on your head because you had a headache. That was yesterday. Ok. |
| | | (Body language). |
| 22 | S10 | Yes. |
| 23 | T | Right. For today, we are going to finish this activity. We started yesterday the exercise, the one that is on page 11. We analysed the vocabulary, we listened to the pronunciation, so I guess now we can work with the last exercise on this page. Remember it was supposed to be the homework. Did you do it? Could you please work on exercise 3 on that page? This one. Two minutes. Exchange information. Make comments just to analyse the basic ideas of this text. |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 24 | S2 | Teacher! |
| | | (Body language to mean come here). |
| 25 | T | Yes? Come here, please. Ok. Can we start? |
| 26 | S1 | We can. |
| 27 | T | Well, if I ask, you can say: may be yes, may be not. Just wait a second. Not yet. It's just a question. You can answer. Ok. Any volunteer to speak? Volunteers? Nobody. Ok. I can call. Who starts? |
| 28 | S10 | Yo. |
| 29 | T | Lorena. Thank you for raising your hand. Eh. About dreadlocks, which details did you get? We have an example: They are never cut. Just one idea. |
| 30 | S10 | We wash the hair only with a special shampoo from the tuna plant. |
| 31 | T | Ok, Lorena, speak up. |
| 32 | S10 | We wash the hair only with a special shampoo from the tuna plant. |
| 33 | T | That is you have dreadlocks, because you said "we". |
| 34 | S10 | Ah, no. |
| 35 | T | I cannot see them. |
| 36 | S1 | They, they. |
| | | (Desperately trying to help his classmate) |
| 37 | S10 | We ... |
| 38 | T | Ah, they. |
| 39 | S10 | AH, sí, verdad. They wash their hair only with a special shampoo. |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 40 | T | You could say: they are washed, the dreadlocks. |
| 41 | S10 | They are wash... |
| | | (Making emphasis on the ed sound of the past tense). |
| 42 | T | They are washed... passive voice. They are washed only with... |
| 43 | S10 | A special shampoo. |
| 44 | T | Ok. What else? Ricardo. |
| 45 | S14 | They doesn't eat meat. |
| 46 | T | Are you talking about the dreadlocks or about the Rastafarians? |
| 47 | S14 | Rastafarians. |
| 48 | T | Ok, you say: Rastafarians don't... |
| 49 | S14 | Don't eat meat. |
| 50 | T | Ok. What else? Carlos? |
| 51 | S1 | They drink coffee and alcohol or milk. |
| 52 | T | They drink, or they don't drink? |
| 53 | S1 | They drink. |
| 54 | T | Aha? |
| 55 | S1 | They drink coffee, alcohol or milk. |
| 56 | T | Coffee, alcohol or milk. Are you sure? |
| 57 | S1 | Yea. I am sure. |
| 58 | S10 | Ah, no, no. |
| 59 | S1 | They drink coffee, alcohol or milk. |
| 60 | T | Let me read a sentence for you: A Rasta man doesn't eat red meat, drink alcohol, coffee, or milk. |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|--|
| 61 | S1 | Drink alcohol. |
| 62 | T | So you mean the negative idea is just for eating, red meat. |
| 63 | S1 | Just for eating. How do you say: I don't drink alcohol y before drink alcohol... |
| | | The class laughed. |
| 64 | T | Could you read the question, Ricardo? |
| 65 | S14 | Ok. The sentence say: doesn't eat red meat. |
| 66 | T | Aha. |
| 67 | S14 | And before, they drink alcohol. Just for meat. |
| 68 | T | And... |
| 69 | S1 | If they drink coffee, alcohol or milk. |
| 70 | T | Well, they don't drink. The thing is the negative idea doesn't cover the whole sentence. |
| 71 | S3 | Where teacher? |
| 72 | T | Look at the second paragraph. It says: A "Rasta-man" (or woman) is a "natural man". A Rasta-man doesn't eat red meat, drink alcohol, coffee or milk. That's the controversial sentence. A Rasta-man doesn't eat red meat, drink alcohol, coffee or milk. The question is: Does he drink alcohol, coffee or milk? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 73 | S1 | Yeah, that's true. |
| 74 | T | According to this text? |
| 75 | S1 | Yea, yeah. It's right. |
| 76 | S5 | Dilo en Español. |
| 77 | T | Why? |
| 78 | S5 | Pa'que entiendan. |
| 79 | S1 | En San Andrés es la misma vaina. |
| | | (Ss shout). No possible transcript. |
| 80 | T | Are they? Noo! Look at this: They say the Rasta-man is a natural man. Do you think it combines with the part of drinking alcohol, coffee or milk? |
| 81 | S1 | Yea. He is a natural man. That means he is natural and coffee is natural. |
| 82 | T | And alcohol is natural? |
| | | (The class laughed) |
| 83 | T | So? |
| 84 | S1 | Hubieran puesto: They don't drink. |
| 85 | T | Ok, in my opinion, they don't do it. Let's do this. For tomorrow, try to investigate. |
| | | (Students protested). |
| 86 | S5 | I agree teacher. Don't worry. |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|--|
| 87 | T | Ok. So it's a controversial point. I have an opinion, you have another one. So, bring books, evidence, otherwise, we are not going to finish. Ok. What else can we say? |
| 88 | S1 | They are vegetarians. |
| 89 | T | They are vegetarians. Lisette? |
| 90 | S3 | Meditate. |
| 91 | T | You are going to say: "They meditate or he meditates". Don't forget. |
| 92 | S3 | They listen to Bob Marley music for meditate. |
| 93 | S15 | No. Bob Marley es para bailar. |
| 94 | T | Oh, yes, yes. A Rasta-man studies the Bible and meditates. Reggae music, Bob Marley music helps us to do this. |
| | | (She read the text from the book). |
| 95 | S17 | Are vegetarians. |
| 96 | T | They are vegetarians. Quickly. Anything else? |
| 97 | S1 | Their roots is in Africa. |
| 98 | T | Their roots lie in Africa. What else? Close your books for a while. Close everything. Right! If anybody comes to our class. Ok, could you please tell me everything about Rasta culture? What would you say? It's my turn to develop your oral skill. Somebody who doesn't know anything |

| | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| | | about Rasta culture arrive and say. Ok, What can you tell me about Rasta culture? Rastafarians, dreadlocks. What would you say? |
| 99 | S14 | They are vegetarians. They don't eat red meat. They never... wash their hair. |
| 100 | T | Exactly. Continue Natalia, please. |
| 101 | S7 | Also they never drink coffee and alcohol or milk and meditate and listen Bob Marley music. |
| 102 | T | They meditate and listen to Bob Marley music. Fabian, continue, please. |
| 103 | S 8 | They are washing their hair with a special shampoo. |
| 104 | T | They wash their hair with a special shampoo. Did you read about this special shampoo? |
| 105 | S8 | From cactus. |
| 106 | T | So they... the cactus and |
| | | (Body language) |
| 107 | S8 | No. They take the plant and take a slice. |
| 108 | T | And ... |
| 109 | S 8 | They study the Bible. |
| 110 | T | Ok, what else? Sergio, continue, please. Nobody has mentioned anything about the hair. What about hair style? |
| 111 | S16 | Y lo que dijimos ayer? |
| 112 | T | What about their hair style? |

| | | |
|-----|------|---|
| 113 | S16 | Most of men in Jamaica have the hair dreadlocks. |
| 114 | T | They use dreadlocks as a hair style. What else? There are many things. Come one sentence. There are many things to say. You haven't mentioned anything about the place where they live... you haven't mentioned about... |
| 115 | S1 | On the other hand they smoke marihuana. |
| 116 | S17 | They are vegetarians |
| 117 | T | They are vegetarians, Mauricio? |
| 118 | S5 | Ya, ya lo dijeron todo. |
| 119 | T | One thing. You have to say. |
| 120 | S5 | Ella dijo lo que era. ¿Cómo hago? |
| 121 | T | What is the story about the bees wax? Do you remember? We are talking about the wax they use. What do they do with this? |
| 122 | S 5 | For the dreadlocks. |
| 123 | T | Because it is too difficult to control the hair. What else? |
| 124 | S14 | Their roots come from Africa. |
| 125 | T | Their roots come from Africa. Exactly. What do you say? |
| 126 | S 17 | They like the beach. |
| 127 | T | Now, the last question. What is your opinion about this culture? Yoour impressions? |
| 128 | S5 | No ... |

| | | |
|-----|------|--|
| 129 | S1 | Pero habla, oye. |
| 130 | S5 | They are crazy. |
| | | (His face turned red). |
| 131 | T | They are crazy in your opinion. What do you say? |
| 132 | S 17 | They have a healthy life. |
| 133 | T | They have a healthy life or life style? Sandra? |
| 134 | S6 | I don't like. |
| 135 | T | You don't like. Why? |
| 136 | S6 | Because they... How to say: no sucios, sino...exacto. Tienen como mal aspecto. |
| 137 | T | You could say: I don't like their physical appearance. |
| 138 | S6 | Exacto. |
| 139 | S5 | Hubieran dicho... |
| 140 | T | Sergio, what do you say? |
| 141 | S16 | They smell "feo". ¿Cómo se dice? |
| 142 | T | You don't like them. Have you experienced the smell? |
| 143 | S16 | No, but I think it's "feo". |
| 144 | S1 | He likes odor men. |
| | | (All the students laughed). |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 145 | T | Right. Any question about this? |
| | | (No question) |
| 146 | T | Could you, please, open your books again on page 12? You have a game quiz which is a puzzle... Puzzle. Could you, please, read the instructions? Could you, please, be quiet for a second? |
| 147 | S 17 | Without looking back at page 11, complete the puzzle. If you don't know an answer, ask a classmate for help. Example: Do you remember how long dreadlocks have been around? Do you know where Donovan Bonner is from? |
| 148 | T | Exactly. That means we have several questions and if we don't know the answer, then we can ask somebody else. Number 3: Dreadlocks have been around for _____(How long?) Cesar? |
| 149 | S8 | Centuries |
| 150 | T | How do you spell it? |
| | | (The student spelled it right) |
| 151 | S8 | C e n t u r I e s |
| 152 | T | Very good. Number 4. Four across. Anybody? |
| 153 | S8 | Do you know where Donovan Bonner is from? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 154 | T | Ask anybody. Spell it, Sandra. |
| 155 | S6 | J a m a i c a. |
| 156 | T | Next one, number 7. Bob Marley. Bob Marley played reggae music (what kind of). How do you spell it? |
| | | (All the students answered) |
| 157 | Ss | R e g g a e. |
| 158 | T | Rastafarians never comb their hair. Spell, please. |
| 159 | Ss | N e v e r. |
| 160 | T | Some people put _____... What? |
| 161 | Ss | Beeswax. |
| 162 | T | Ok, beeswax. Some people put beeswax on their dreadlocks during the first month. Now, Rastafarians avoid eating... Lisette, please? |
| 163 | S3 | What is the meaning of avoid? |
| 164 | T | It's a verb. May be the opposite. For example, you can say vegetarians avoid eating red meat. |
| 165 | S3 | Never, teacher? |
| 166 | S4 | Abolir. |
| 167 | T | So, Lisette? |
| 168 | S3 | Meat. |

| | | |
|-----|------|---|
| 169 | T | Meat? |
| 170 | S3 | Meat. |
| 171 | T | Carlos? |
| 172 | S1 | Do you know where the shampoo for the dreadlocks comes from? |
| 173 | S 17 | It comes from the tuna plant. |
| 174 | T | How do you spell it? |
| 175 | S 17 | T u n a p l a n t. |
| 176 | T | Number 5. Rastafarians refuse to drink...? |
| 177 | S 10 | Coffee. |
| 178 | T | Now you see? |
| 179 | S1 | Bueno, los que están equivocados son ellos. |
| 180 | T | Number 6. |
| 181 | S6 | Rastafarians sometimes use a dread bag to protect their hair. |
| 182 | T | Could you repeat? |
| 183 | S6 | D r e a d b a g. |
| 184 | T | And finally. The tuna plant feels ____? |
| 185 | S17 | Slimy. |
| 186 | T | Slimy? How do you spell it? |
| 187 | S17 | S l i m y. |
| 188 | T | Close your books. I'm going to give you an exercise. |
| | | (The students protested). |

| | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| 189 | Ss | No! |
| 190 | S10 | Teacher, tengo que llegar temprano. |
| 191 | T | It's really very early. |
| | | (The student to several classmates) |
| 192 | S10 | Ok, bye, bye. |
| 193 | T | Ok. General questions. Two groups. How many people do we have? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven eight, nine... Sergio, you start. The original question. Do you know...bla, bla, bla, bla. You are going to ask... but... |
| 194 | S16 | Do you know which the largest country in the world is? |
| 195 | T | Ok. Ask somebody in this group. Adriana. |
| 196 | | (All the students were shouting at the same time). |
| 197 | S17 | The largest country in the world is America. |
| 198 | T | Ok, America is not a country. Bad answer. Question 2. |
| 199 | S17 | Do you know what the name of the French president is? |
| 200 | S5 | The name of the French president is Jacques Chirac. |
| 201 | T | So, good answer, good question. Third question: Mauricio. |
| 202 | S5 | Do you know how many teeth we have? |
| 203 | S10 | We have 32. |
| 204 | T | Question number 4. |
| 205 | S 7 | Do you know who the author of Los Miserables is? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|--|
| 206 | S 8 | The author is Victor Hugo. |
| 207 | T | Question number 5. |
| 208 | S1 | Do you know what Marsellesa is? |
| 209 | S15 | Yo no sé esa vaina. |
| | | (Some other students were whispering). |
| 210 | S15 | Himno. |
| 211 | T | Ingrid, you're going to ask the question. |
| 212 | S11 | Do you know where the "D" from is? |
| 213 | T | Let me explain: the last week I told you that you have to analyze the second part... is from |
| 214 | S6 | From India. |
| 215 | T | Wrong |

Classroom Observation No. 3

| No. | Subject | Discourse |
|-----|---------|---|
| | | (It was raining too hard) |
| 1 | T | Are you cold? You will have 5 minutes. |
| | | (She gave the students a paper). |
| 2 | S2 | Teacher, eso qué es? |
| 3 | T | Say it in English. |
| 4 | S2 | Could not ask. |
| | | (She was ashamed. Then, the students were organized in two groups to play a game. One of the groups was only composed of 6 girls and the other of 4 boys and 1 girl. They were sat in the same way than the classes before. They start discussing the answers in Spanish among them. But some minutes later, both groups asked questions to the teacher. They tried to do it in English). |
| 5 | T | Do we start? |
| 6 | Ss | Noo! |
| 7 | T | More minutes? |
| 8 | S10 | Eugenia, ven acá, hazme el favor. |
| 9 | T | Call me in English, please. |

| | | |
|----|-----|--|
| | | (Five minutes later, another girl, Adriana, arrived. She joined to the group of boys |
| 10 | T | So, don't we start? |
| 11 | S17 | Me, teacher. |
| | | (The teacher gave her the paper). |
| 12 | T | Ok, it's time to start. Could you, please reorganize the chairs? Right. |
| 13 | S17 | Do you know which the official currency in Guatemala is? |
| 14 | Ss | No. |
| 15 | T | Nobody knows? It's a bird, a kind of bird which is really traditional in this country. Well, it's called Quetzal. It's the name of the bird. |
| 16 | S 8 | But what is the question? |
| 17 | T | Ah, the currency is the official money in the country. For example, we have pesos or US dollars. |
| 18 | S7 | Do you know where powder was invented? |
| 19 | T | I'm going to give you a clue. |
| 20 | S7 | Ah, in China. Pólvora. I got the answer give a point. |
| 21 | S17 | Sí, sí, la 11. |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 22 | S1 | Tírale la del dragón. |
| 23 | S15 | Do you know when dragons disappeared? |
| 24 | T | You got five. Who answers, Harry? You can consult. Nobody else? Lorena? |
| 25 | S10 | Espérate un momentico. |
| 26 | T | How do you say in English “un momentico”? |
| 27 | S1 | One moment, please. |
| 28 | S10 | I think they didn’t exist. |
| 29 | T | Five points. Next one. Roxana. |
| 30 | S12 | Do you know when a man travelled to the moon for the first time? César? |
| 31 | S8 | A man travelled to the moon for the first time in 1967. |
| 32 | T | Is that right? |
| 33 | Ss | Noo! |
| 34 | T | It’s wrong. Any way, it was in 1969. Five for the question. Next one. |
| 35 | S8 | Do you know who discovered penicilline? |
| 36 | T | Who is going to answer? Johanna. |
| 37 | S5 | Ajo, con tanta psicóloga que hay ahí. |
| | | (The students were consulting). |
| 38 | T | Nobody knows? |
| 39 | S17 | Pasteur. Yo sé. Un nombre largo... |
| 40 | T | His last name is Fl... Alexander Fl... |
| 41 | S17 | Fleming. |
| 42 | S2 | Do you know who invented the telephone? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 43 | T | Who is going to answer? |
| 44 | S2 | Mauricio. |
| 45 | T | Question : correct. |
| 46 | S5 | The telephone: Edison. |
| 47 | T | Answer: 0. Alexander Graham Bell. |
| | | (The students protested against the score). |
| 48 | S1 | Do you know which the largest bone in the human body is? |
| | | (His group protested and he changed the question). |
| 49 | S1 | Do you know how many fingers... |
| 50 | S7 | The same, the same. |
| 51 | T | No, no. The other one. |
| | | (Ss of group 2 protested and asked for the same question). |
| 52 | S1 | Vamos a tirártela a ti, la que está allá, de última. |
| 53 | T | Lorena. Say Lorena. |
| 54 | S10 | The femur. |
| 55 | S10 | Do you know how baby cats are called? |
| 56 | S1 | Kitty. |
| 57 | T | Five for the question, five for the answer. |
| | | (Applauses) |
| 58 | S5 | Do you know why 1945, historically important is? |
| 59 | T | No points for the question. Mauricio, who is going to answer? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 60 | S5 | Ah, Carmen. |
| | | (The girls discussed) |
| 61 | S1 | Esos consensos no se permiten. |
| 62 | S2 | We supposed... |
| 63 | S1 | No, eso no es suponiendo! |
| 64 | S17 | No, because... |
| 65 | T | Bring them tomorrow. Question: 5 points; Answer: no point. |
| 66 | S2 | Do you know which the longest river in the world is? |
| 67 | S1 | Nilo. |
| 68 | T | How do you say that in English? |
| 69 | S1 | River... Nile. |
| 70 | S17 | Do you know how many fingers elephants have? |
| 71 | S5 | Eso ya no lo habían dicho? |
| | | (She was raising her hand during a long time). |
| 72 | S17 | Yo escojo a quién. |
| 73 | S19 | Elephants don't have fingers. |
| | | (All the students laughed). |
| 74 | T | If they have no fingers, what do they have? |
| | | No answer |
| 75 | T | Some have 3, some have 4. 35 points for each group. |
| 76 | T | Obviously you have to raise your hand. Do you know which the capital city of Ireland is? The Republic of Ireland. |
| 77 | S1 | Dinamarca? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| 78 | T | Do you know which the capital of California is? |
| 79 | Ss | No, no, países. |
| 80 | T | Sacramento. Do you know which the capital of Portugal is? |
| 81 | S15 | Lisboa. |
| | | (Applauses) |

Classroom Observation No. 4

| No. | Subject | Discourse |
|-----|---------|--|
| | | (Greetings and information about the evaluation). |
| 1 | T | Good morning. Did you do your homework? |
| | | (Silent) |
| 2 | T | Passive voice. This is the last topic. |
| | | <p>(She wrote on the board):</p> <p>Active: My <u>father</u> reads the newspaper</p> <p>(Subject) every day.</p> <p>Passive: The <u>newspaper</u> is read by my</p> <p>(Object) father every day.</p> |
| 3 | T | First question. Do you think both sentences mean the same? I repeat the question. Do you think the content in the information in these two sentences have the same similar content? The content is not different, but obviously they look different. |
| | | (The students were sat as an auditorium and paid attention to the grammar explanations. They were taking notes and participated when the teacher asked them about the forms of the irregular verbs, for instance: The newspaper <u>was</u> read. |

| No. | Subject | Discourse |
|-----|---------|--|
| 4 | S1 | The subjects is first in the first one. |
| 5 | T | Ah! And the object is first in the second one. |
| 6 | T | I repeat: the content basically is similar for the passive voice and the active voice. The difference is the structure. Why? Active voice starts with the subject. On the other hand, passive voice starts with the object. The newspaper does not read. It is an object. So if you begin the sentence with the subject, it is active. If we start the sentence with the object, the structure is passive voice. The second difference is the verb form has not changed. What is this? |
| 7 | S1 | To be |
| 8 | T | Which tense is this one? Simple past, present perfect, simple present? |
| | | (No answer) |
| 9 | T | Well, I have to remind. First, it is an irregular verb whose simple past is this and its participle is this. Read-read-read. Do you have a question? |
| 10 | S1 | Is the verb to be? |
| 11 | T | The main verb? |
| 12 | S1 | Yes. |

| Turn | Subj. | Discourse |
|------|-------|--|
| 13 | T | Let's see and I will give you an example. Obviously if the verb is irregular... Do you have any problem? No? Never mind. If the verb is irregular, you have to use the past participle. As the active voice, the passive voice could be used in any tense. If we change the tense of the verb to be, we change the tense of the passive voice. For example, who can change this passive sentence into the simple past? The same sentence, the same idea, into the simple past.? |
| 13 | T | Active: My father reads the newspaper every day. Passive: The newspaper is read by my father every day. Conclusion: How do we change the tense of the passive voice? Changing the verb to be. So if the verb to be, just the verb to be, is in the simple present, the whole sentence is passive voice in the simple present. If we change to be, in this case, I mean the simple past, the whole sentence will be passive voice in the simple past. Ok? So does this explanation match with what you have |
| | | (The teacher wrote on the board) |
| 14 | T | Students at this university do homework. (Subject) (Object) |
| 15 | T | Students do homework. Is this active or passive? |
| | | (Some students answered at the same time). |
| 16 | Ss | Active. |
| 17 | T | Do you consider this the object or the subject? |
| | | (The teacher pointed at students). |
| 18 | S1 | Subject. |
| 19 | T | Subject, because they act. And if I want to change it? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|--|
| 20 | S6 | Homework is done by the students. |
| | | (S1 was answering at the same time): |
| 21 | S1 | Homework is done by the students. |
| 22 | T | Now, the same sentence, into the simple past. Sandra: Could you change this sentence into the simple past? Instead of using the simple present, use the simple past. Change the passive voice, which is in the simple present, into the simple past. |
| 23 | S6 | No... Homework was done by students. |
| | | (She hesitated and looked ashamed). |
| 24 | T | The second part is the past participle linking, never changes. It doesn't matter if it is singular or plural. Who can give the same sentence in the present perfect? You have to change this part and use the present perfect. |
| 25 | S1 | The students have done homework. |
| 26 | T | Can I erase this part? |
| 27 | S1 | Yeah! |
| 28 | T | Homework has been done. Which is to be in the present tense, and then the past participle...by the students. So that is all English, not Chinese. Right, Ingrid? |
| 29 | S11 | Ya entendí arriba, pero no sé por qué have been. |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|--|
| 30 | T | Because for the present perfect active: The first verb you have used with the passive voice is to be. So this part here is to be... You always use this verb with the passive voice. But it is the present perfect. How do you form the present perfect? Have and the main verb in the past participle. |
| | | To be is irregular. Fortunately you can use Spanish to have an idea. Los estudiantes de esta universidad han hecho las tareas (Active). Han hecho. Han, del verbo haber (have). Hecho, participio pasado (done) del verbo hacer. Las tareas han sido hechas por los estudiantes (passive). Sido, verbo ser. Hechas, participio pasado. So it is not complicated. |
| 31 | S1 | Ay, esos gringos se la complican. |
| 32 | S2 | Yo no entiendo "The newspaper was read". |
| 33 | S1 | Pero <i>read</i> es pasado? |
| 34 | T | Past participle. You cannot say read in the simple present. Now each one of you is going to produce an active voice sentence and then, you are going to change it into the passive voice. |
| | | (Some students were whispering and the girls were working in pairs). |
| 35 | S6 | Cuándo se acaban las clases? |
| 36 | T | If you ask me in English, I answer. Volunteers? |

| | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 37 | S1 | <p>Active:</p> <p><u>My cousin</u> <u>eats</u> meat every Friday.</p> <p>(Subject) (present)</p> <p>Passive:</p> <p>Meat is <u>eaten</u> by my cousin every Friday. The verb eat is an irregular verb. So it is eat, ate, eaten.</p> |
| 38 | T | Very well. |
| 39 | S11 | <p>Active:</p> <p><u>My mother</u> <u>cleans</u> <u>the house</u> everyday.</p> <p>Subject s.present object</p> |
| 40 | T | And the passive, how do you start? |
| 41 | S11 | The house is cleaned by my mother every day. |

Classroom Observation No. 5

| No. | Subject | Discourse |
|-----|---------|--|
| 1 | T1 | I have to go to another class. Today you will have another teacher. |
| | | (T2 reads the list of the students to verify attendance and give them some instructions in Spanish): |
| 2 | T2 | Yo al que habla en clase lo separo. La segunda vez, lo saco, porque la cosa no está para botar la plata, \$200.000, cada tres meses, y primero, porque a mí me gusta dar clases. Ok, why am I here? I'm sure you know why I am here today. Who has any idea why I am here? The semester is over. |
| 3 | S7 | The final test. |
| 4 | T2 | Aha, the final exam. The oral test, in order you to know how I am, my accent, so that you cannot say: "No, yo no le entiendo nada". I was living in the United States for 20 years, I've been teaching languages... Apart from that, I don't know if you know what the final test consist of. Ok, this unit covers different themes. Let's suppose you have different topics. Right now, we are going to talk about food. What else have you talked about? |

| No. | Subject | Discourse |
|-----|---------|--|
| 5 | S3 | Accidents. |
| 6 | T2 | Accidents. What else? |
| 7 | S4 | Countries. |
| 8 | T2 | Countries, what else? |
| 9 | S7 | Symbols, signs. |
| 10 | T2 | Do you have signs here, at the university? |
| 11 | S1 | No. |
| 12 | T2 | Ok, signs show something you have to do or not to do. These are traffic signs. |
| | | (Some students arrived late to the class and talking aloud. T2 stopped the class and repeated the rule about not talking in class. |
| 13 | T2 | Llegaste tarde, así que no sabes que mi regla es: dos veces la persona hablando, la separo de quien está hablando y a la tercera se sale de clase. Ok, next one. A ver, regla: Dos veces hablando las separo, tercera, se va de clase. Ok, next: How many kinds of questions do you know? |
| 14 | S1 | Two. |
| 15 | T2 | Two: direct questions and indirect questions. What is the characteristic of the direct questions? |
| 15 | S1 | Do you. |

| Turn | Subj. | Discourse |
|------|-------|--|
| 16 | T2 | Ok, do is one of them. How do you call that, grammatically speaking? |
| 17 | S1 | An auxiliary. |
| 18 | T2 | An auxiliary. So any sentence that starts with an auxiliary is a direct question. You have do, does or did. Ok, another auxiliary? |
| | | No answer. |
| 19 | T2 | You have the verb to be, as an auxiliary: Are you tired? Am I your teacher? That's an auxiliary. And another auxiliary is.. |
| 20 | S1 | Have. |
| 21 | T2 | When do we use have? |
| | | (No answer) |
| 22 | T2 | For the perfect tenses. Right? I have been to the United States. I mean, when you have these three auxiliaries, one two or three. Indirect questions, they begin by what kind of questions? |
| 23 | S1 | Do you know. |
| 24 | T2 | Do you know. Very good! Do you know, do you remember, can you tell me, could you tell me... |
| 25 | T | <p>Direct : <u>Do</u> – <u>Does</u> – <u>Did</u> – <u>To be</u>, <u>Have</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 2 3</p> <p>Indirect: Do you know, Can you tell me, Do you remember?</p> <p>(When you ask for directions)</p> |

| No. | Subject | Discourse |
|-----|---------|--|
| 26 | T | Ok, if you know this chart you will have no problem. That's one thing that you have to know for grammar: direct questions and indirect questions. What else? |
| 27 | S1 | Passive voice. |
| 28 | T2 | Passive voice. Aha? What tenses? |
| 29 | S1 | Present and past. |
| 30 | T2 | What else do you need to know? When you studied accidents, what else did you study? Go to your book. Try to remember. |
| 31 | S7 | Past continuous. |
| 32 | T2 | Past continuous. So, remember, anything that is continuous means what... grammatically speaking. What is the characteristic of continuous. |
| 33 | S7 | The action is not finished. |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 34 | T2 | <p>So the characteristic is that you have the I n g form, right? Past continuous, so the verb to be has to be in the past, present continuous, the verb to be has to be in present, and present perfect continuous, it has to be in present perfect, right?</p> <p>And the present perfect... remember that when you have <u>have</u> is because you have the perfect tenses.</p> <p>If you know that, if you review that, you will be ready for your fifth level.</p> <p>You have to know auxiliaries, do you know, do you remember, and the WH questions... very important.</p> |
| | | <p>They can be here or here, right? That's why they are very important. I think that's all. Ok, but in order to know this, you need to know the irregular verbs. Because with the passive voice you need to know the past participle. What is the past participle of feel?</p> |
| 35 | S7 | Felt. |
| 36 | T2 | <p>Ok, if you go to the back cover you are going to find those verbs. Here you have the past and the past participle. You use the past participle with the perfect tenses because you need have plus the past participle and you need for the passive voice to be plus the past participle.</p> |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 36 | T 2 | <p>Example:</p> <p>A letter is sent every day. Se envía una carta todos los días.</p> <p>So that's why you need to know the present or the past participle. If you want to write them down, please do it: I need to know the past participle to write all the perfect tenses and all the passive voice. If you remember that and you practice, you won't have problems with your test.</p> <p>Ok, now that you know why I am here, because I am going to be for the oral test, remember that I'm going to be here for the written part. The oral is supposed to be about symbols. So, you have to check grammar and structure, vocabulary. I'm going to check the speed, la velocidad, fluency, la fluidez, the way you talk, your ideas.</p> <p>I would like you to open your books on page 35, because we are going to have a final conversation that is very important for you to know that. How is it cooked? Those are the four questions we have on that page. What is the first question you have on the left? What is one of your favourite dishes?</p> |

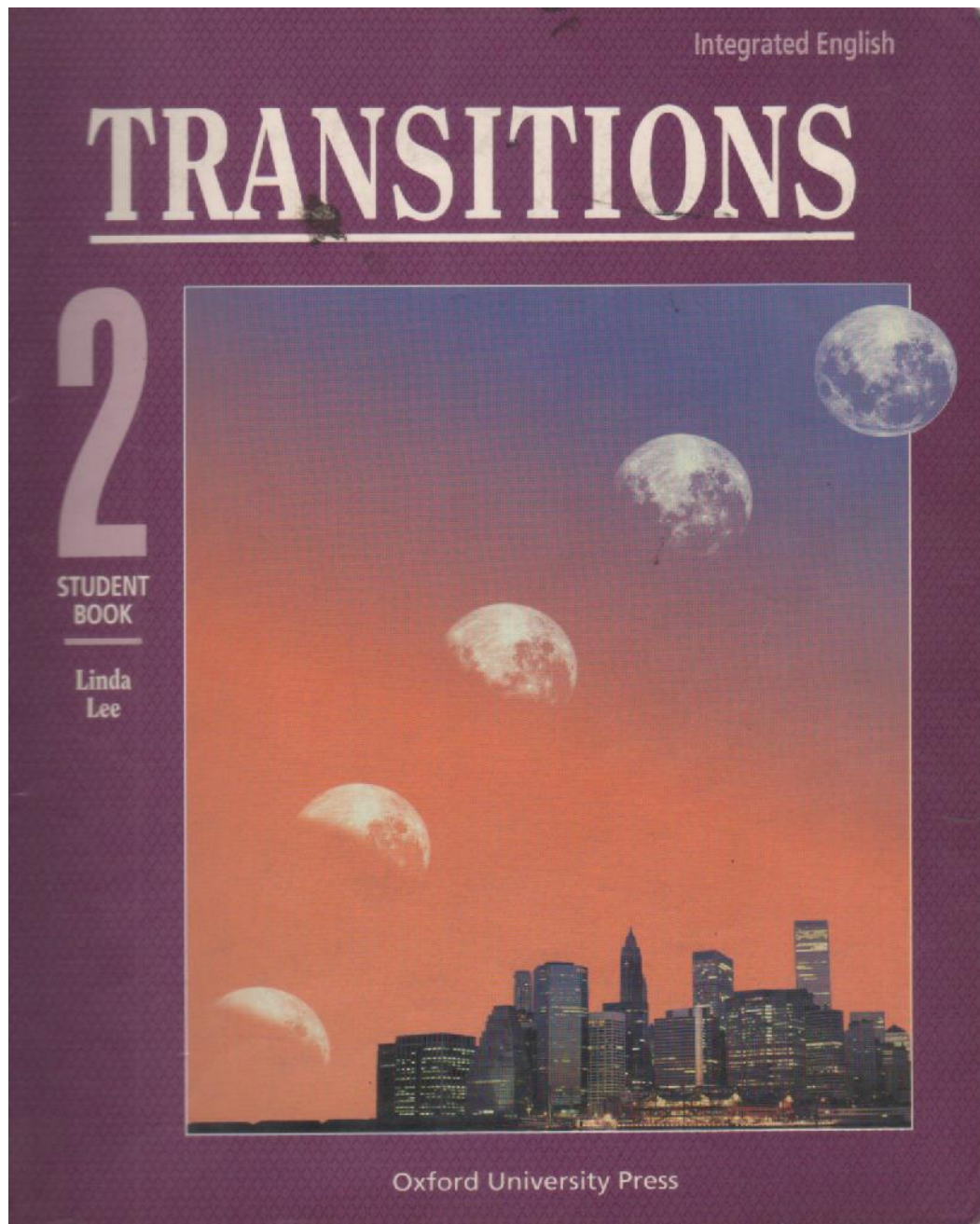
| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 37 | S7 | What is one of your favourite dishes? |
| 38 | T2 | Ok, and the vocabulary you need to know is dessert. What is dessert? |
| 39 | S7 | Postre. |
| 40 | T2 | You need soup, stew, one pot dish. For example, sancocho is one pot dish. Pot is olla. So in one pot dish you put name, plátano, chicken and beans and everything. |
| | | (One of the student was afraid of asking to the teacher): |
| 41 | S2 | Stew? |
| 42 | T2 | Stew is guisar. Carne guisada. For example, how do you say borracho? Soup? Dessert? |
| 43 | S2 | Dessert. |
| 44 | T2 | What is the next question? |
| 45 | S 17 | What is it made of? |
| 46 | T2 | In other words, it is asking for the ingredients. It is made of milk, sugar and eggs. What is it made of? Here you have the ingredients. Next question? |
| 47 | S 17 | How is it cooked? |
| 48 | T2 | How is it cooked. You have the passive voice: verb to be and the past participle. So the past participle is boiled, stirred, grilled, barbequed, steamed, fried, baked and cooked. This is important for you to practice the pronunciation of ed, right? How do you pronounce it after k? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 49 | S 2 | Baked... |
| | | (The students were not sure). |
| 50 | T2 | Baked, as a t. And after and m? T or D? |
| | | (The students did not answer). |
| 51 | T2 | Steamed, as a d. So baked is a t and steamed is a d. What is the last question? |
| 52 | S 8 | What does the plate ... |
| 53 | T2 | And here the vocabulary is: sweet. What is sweet? Dulce. Bitter? Amargo. Sour? Ácido. Sweet and Sour? Agridulce. What else? Spice or spicy? When you have pepper and a lot of hot peppers. And the opposite of spicy is mild. That is food prepared for people who cannot take things that are too strong. Mild? Simple. Baja de todo. So that is for you vocabulary questions? What is it? Remember if I ask you: What is feijojaya? You say It is Brazilian or Chinese or Japanese? Sukiyaki. What is Sukiyaki. What is ... so give me one minute to get my tape. |
| 54 | T2 | And French caramel? What is French caramel? |
| 55 | S1 | A dessert. |
| 56 | T2 | What is it made of? |
| 57 | S1 | Milk, sugar, eggs. |
| 58 | T2 | Ok. The SERVICE: Preview. Activity Two. Listen and check true or false: In the service ... What is one of your favourite dish? |
| 59 | S 2 | What is service? |

| Turn | Subject | Discourse |
|------|---------|---|
| 60 | T2 | The kind of food they serve, the prices, the ambience, if it is very elegant, very kind, very polite, slow or very fast. So when you talk about the service. You are going to practice these questions. Let's practice. |
| | | (The students read in order, but not the one that spoke in Spanish all the time. She did not look at the teacher. The teacher pronounced again the questions and the students repeated). |
| | | <p>The group started another exercise. They began to ask and answer in pairs and the teacher was checking around the class.</p> <p>I could see that the two boys coming from Medellín and Bogotá looked as if they were pleased working together. The girl student that always spoke in Spanish looked as if she were bored. S17, on that have been selected to be interviewed looked bored, too.</p> |
| | | It was noticeable her change in class. At the end, the teacher made a review of the questions on page 35 and the questionnaire about Eating Out). |
| 61 | T2 | Study this. I'll see you on the final. Bye. |

Appendix E

“Transitions”, Student Book 2, Unit 2



Unit 2

Topic: Symbols
Language: Getting information
Focus: Direct and indirect questions

PRESENTATION

1. Look at the photographs. Do you know what these things are? Do you know what they symbolize?
2. Choose a word or phrase to complete each sentence below.

eternal love and commitment
 democracy, peace, progress, justice, and equality
 the fight against AIDS
 the five major regions of the world
 good luck
 peace

a. The Olympic rings represent _____.



b. In some countries, a four-leaf clover is a symbol of _____.



c. The five stars on the flag of Singapore stand for _____.



d. The red ribbon has become a worldwide symbol of _____.



e. The wedding ring is a symbol of _____.



f. The two olive branches on the United Nations flag symbolize _____.



3. Listen and check your answers.

PRACTICE

1. Read questions *a-f* below. Then answer the questions at the bottom of the box.

GETTING INFORMATION:

Direct Questions

- What does your country's flag look like?
- What is the national symbol of your country?
- Is a four-leaf clover a symbol of good luck in your country?

Indirect Questions

- Do you know what the flag of Jamaica looks like?
- Do you know what the national symbol of France is?
- Do you know if a four-leaf clover is a symbol of good luck in Ireland?

- Compare the direct and indirect questions above. What is different about the form of the questions?
- Which questions above can be answered with a yes or no?
- Look at question *f*. When do we use *if* in an indirect question?

Answers on page 94

2. We asked a Canadian the questions below.

- What does the Canadian flag look like?
- What is the national symbol of Canada?
- When did British Columbia become a Canadian province?
- Who is the prime minister of Canada?
- Is Canada a democracy?

How would you ask your classmates the same questions?

- Do you know what the Canadian flag looks like?
- Do you know _____?
- _____?
- _____?
- _____?



3. Pairs. Complete these conversations with direct or indirect questions.

- (A) Do you know where this money is from?
(where/this money/from)
- (B) Yes. It's from Korea.
- (A) _____?
(whose picture/on it)
- (B) Of course. That's King Sejong.
- (A) I see. _____?
(when/king)
- (B) In the 15th century. He was very famous.
- (A) Really? _____.
(Why/famous)
- (B) He invented the Korean alphabet.
- (A) The king invented the alphabet! That's amazing!



PRONUNCIATION POINT: Question intonation

What does the Canadian flag look like?

Do you know what the Olympic flag looks like?

Go to page 90.

Listen and check your ideas.

LISTENING

1. Listen and complete this conversation.

- A: Do you know what this symbol means?
 B: Yes. It means _____.
 A: How do you spell that?
 B: _____.
 A: What does it mean?
 B: It means that something can catch fire—like gasoline. Gasoline is _____.
 A: Oh, I see. Thanks.



2. What do these symbols mean? Listen and write the answer under each symbol. Then compare answers with your classmates.



a. _____



b. _____



c. _____

SHARE INFORMATION

1. Person A: Go to page 81.
 Person B: Go to page 82.

2. Pairs. Which signs are unfamiliar to you? Ask your partner about them.

Example:

Do you know what this sign means?

How do you say _____ in English?

How do you spell that?



Morocco



South Africa



Spain



Australia



Japan



Jordan

PREVIEW

1. Pairs. Look at the pictures and answer the questions below.



The way people wear their hair is often a symbol of something. Do you know why Buddhist monks shave their heads?

- ☐ To show they are very poor.
- ☒ To show that they have separated themselves from the world.
- ☐ To show that they live together.



Around the world weddings contain certain symbols. Do you know why brides in some countries paint their hands?

- ☐ To symbolize good luck.
- ☒ To represent the strength of love in marriage.
- ☐ To show that they are very rich.



The color black symbolizes different things in different cultures. Can you guess why these people are dressed in black?

- ☐ To show how important they are.
- ☒ To show that they are sad because someone has died.
- ☐ To show that they are in the same family.

2. Listen and check your guesses.

3. Pairs. Ask and answer these questions. Then share your answers with the class.

- a. In your country do any groups of people wear their hair in a special way? Why?
- b. In your country what are some symbols of love?
- c. In your country what does the color black symbolize?

READ AND TAKE NOTES


1. Pairs. Before reading the interview on page 11, answer these questions.

- a. What's the title of the interview?
- b. Do you know what "dreadlocks" are?
- c. Look quickly over the interview and study the pictures. Do you know what "dreadlocks" are now?

2. Read the interview on page 11 and underline the most important ideas.



Dreadlocks

Symbol of the "Natural Man" 

Some people grow dreadlocks because they like the style, but for many people, especially in Jamaica, dreadlocks are part of a way of thinking and living called Rastafarianism. Donovan Bonner, from Jamaica, recently talked to us about dreadlocks.

Interviewer: *Wow! Look at all that hair! How does it grow that way?*

Donovan: First, never comb the hair, and never, never cut the hair. Some people, for the first month, will put beeswax¹ on it. After that, just keep it natural and let it grow.

Interviewer: *Why do you wear dreadlocks?*

Donovan: Dreadlocks have been around a long, long time—centuries. In Jamaica, having dreadlocks means you're a Rastafarian. It means you believe a certain way.

A "Rasta-man" (or woman) is a "natural man." A Rasta-man doesn't eat red meat, drink alcohol, coffee, or milk. Many Rastafarians are vegetarians.² We know our roots lie in Africa.³ A Rasta-man studies the Bible and meditates. Reggae music—Bob Marley music—helps us to do this. Hair is the foundation of⁴ the natural man.

Interviewer: *How do you take care of dreadlocks?*

Donovan: We wash the hair only with special shampoo from the tuna plant (a cactus). Some people take a piece of this plant and slice it open. Inside is some stuff—it feels slimy⁵—that they put on the hair to help it grow. And sometimes they put the hair in a hat called a dread bag to take care of the locks and protect them from dirt.

¹beeswax: wax made by bees

²vegetarians: people who don't eat meat

³our roots lie in Africa: our history started in Africa

⁴the foundation of: the most important part about being

⁵slimy: unpleasantly wet and slippery

3. Pairs. Read the article again and look for information to complete the chart below. Then compare answers with another pair.

| Topic | Details |
|--------------|---|
| Dreadlocks | they are never cut or combed |
| Rastafarians | people who believe in a certain way don't eat red meat |



TRUE OR FALSE?

1. Pairs. Write four sentences about dreadlocks or Rastafarians.

Example:

Many Rastafarians are vegetarians.

- a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____

2. Change two of your sentences to make them false.

Example:

~~All~~

~~Many Rastafarians are vegetarians.~~

3. Get together with another pair and read them your sentences. Ask them to identify the false sentences.

PUZZLE

Without looking back at page 11, complete the puzzle. If you don't know an answer, ask a classmate for help.

Example:

Do you remember how long dreadlocks have been around?

Do you know where Donovan Bonner is from?

ACROSS

- 3 Dreadlocks have been around for _____. (how long?)
4 Donovan Bonner is from _____. (where?)
7 Bob Marley played _____ music. (what kind of?)
8 Rastafarians _____ comb their hair. (how often?)
9 Some people put _____ on their dreadlocks during the first month. (what?)

DOWN

- 1 Rastafarians avoid eating _____. (what?)
2 The shampoo for dreadlocks comes from the _____. (where?)
5 Rastafarians refuse to drink _____. (what?)
6 Rastafarians sometimes use a _____ to protect their hair. (what?)
10 The tuna plant feels _____ inside. (how?)

